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GREAT AUTHORS

FROM GOLDSMITH TO WORDSWORTH

SECOND PERIOD

GOLDSMITH — COWPER
JOHNSON — BURNS
GIBBON — SCOTT
BURKE — SOUTHEY
BURKE — WORDSWORTH

1/6

Maggie G. Gentry
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Royal English Class-Books.

GREAT AUTHORS

From Goldsmith to Wordsworth

GOLDSMITH—JOHNSON—GIBBON—BURKE—BURNS—COWPER
BYRON—SCOTT—SOUTHEY—WORDSWORTH
CONTEMPORARY WRITERS.

BY

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Second Period.

INTRODUCTION.

The Second Period—from Goldsmith to Wordsworth—extends, speaking broadly, from the middle of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century. As it covers in whole or in part the reigns of three of the Georges of the House of Hanover, it is sometimes called the Georgian age.

The number of standard English classics produced in this period—of works whose titles are household words—is by no means so striking as in the case of the former period. When we have named Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Cowper's *Task*, and the poems of Burns, Byron, Scott, and Wordsworth, we have well-nigh exhausted the list.

In the early part of the period—that is to say, during the latter half of the eighteenth century—the influence of the formal poetry of Pope was seen in that of Johnson and his contemporaries. A new day began to dawn when Robert Burns wrote his matchless lyrics, and when William Cowper and James Thomson also went back to nature for their subjects and their inspiration.

This return to nature and to true feeling had already shown itself in prose fiction. Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* is an artless story of domestic life, which owes its enduring popularity to its simplicity and its truthfulness as a picture of human nature. The same qualities are seen in Goldsmith's comedies, and also, though less prominently, in his poems.

Then came the poetical romances of Scott, and his still more wonderful prose tales, in which the past was called up before the present with the touch of the magician's wand, and a new world of characters was made to live and move.

The latter half of the eighteenth century, when English poetry had sunk to its lowest level, was made famous by the great historians Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon, and the historical and political philosopher Burke. To these writers is due the credit of showing how admirably English prose was adapted for the highest kind of work.

Byron and Scott are often bracketed as poets of the same school. Both were narrative poets; but they were animated with very different spirits, and they worked toward wholly different ideals of human nature. In these respects the poets of his time most in sympathy with Byron were Shelley and Keats, both of whom died before him. Byron shares, however, with Scott the distinction of having proved the capacity of modern verse to embody magnificent and sustained descriptions of scenery.

The art of literary criticism, stimulated no doubt by Pope's poetical *Essay*, and by the example of Addison, made great progress in this period. Dr. Samuel Johnson was its acknowledged high-priest during a great part of the time. His *Lives of the Poets* contains a larger body of critical opinions than had ever before been brought together by a single writer. His opinions are not always sound. They were affected by the tendencies of his time. He depreciated Milton and he exalted Dryden and Pope. Nevertheless he perceived that criticism ought to be guided by principles. In one department he did good service. His *Dictionary* was the earliest attempt in English to justify definitions by appealing to the usage of standard writers.

Criticism became more systematic, and more independent, after the establishment of the two famous Quarterlies—the Whig *Edinburgh* in 1802, and the Tory *Quarterly* in 1809.

The names most closely associated with the early history of the *Edinburgh Review* are those of Lord Jeffrey, Sir James Mackintosh, and Sydney Smith; and with that of the *Quarterly*, William Gifford and Sir Walter Scott. *Blackwood's Magazine*, the earliest of the Monthlies, that now wield so much influence on public opinion in matters political and social, as well as literary, dates from the same period, having been started in 1817. The *Edinburgh* acquired fresh life and increased prosperity when its staff was joined by young Macaulay, whose name may serve to connect the prose of the Second Period with that of the Third.

At the close of the period, Wordsworth and the Lakists completed the work which Burns, Cowper, and Thomson had begun—the rescue of poetry from formalism, and its reunion with the freshness and the simplicity of nature. In this work Wordsworth had the greatest share, and he earnestly explained and defended in eloquent prose the principles on which he wrought. He had able and zealous helpers in Coleridge and Southey. On the labours of these men, the poetical literature of our Third Period—the Victorian age—is distinctly founded.

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GREAT AUTHORS.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

1. Charles Goldsmith, an Irish Protestant clergyman, was trying to live on £40 a year at the little village of Pallasmore, in the county of Longford, when in 1728 his famous son Oliver was born. Before the child was two years old, a better living, worth nearly £200 a year, rewarded this good parson for his virtues and his toils; and the family removed in consequence to a commodious house at Lissoy, in the county of West Meath. There little Oliver went to the village school, and had a severe attack of smallpox, which left deep marks on his face. He grew up to be a thick, awkward, pock-marked boy; and when he left his native village for higher schools elsewhere, he was knocked about and made fun of by his cruel seniors, until the butt began to retort in sharp wit on those who sneered at his ugly face or his uncouth movements.

2. In 1745—the year of the last Jacobite rebellion—young Oliver became a sizar[1] at Trinity College, Dublin. The sizar of those days, known by a coarse black sleeveless gown and a red cap, had to do much servile work,

1 **Sizar,** one of the lowest class of students—originally those who served out the *sizes* or rations of food at Cambridge.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

such as sweeping the college courts, carrying dishes up from the kitchen, and waiting on the Fellows as they dined. The kindness of an uncle, who had paid most of his school bills, followed him to college; but even with this aid, when the Rev. Charles Goldsmith died in 1747, his son Oliver was left not very far from starvation.

3. He began to taste the sweets of authorship while yet at college. In his little room there he used to write street ballads, which he sold to a printer for five shillings a-piece. He was fond of stealing out at night to hear them sung, and to watch their ready sale, in the dimly-lighted streets. Seldom, however, when he sold a new ballad, did the five shillings go home with the hungry student. A share of the hard-earned money was sure to go to beggars who beset him on the way. Thus early

did Goldsmith's guileless good-nature and improvidence show themselves.

4. Being disliked and discouraged by his tutor, he grew idler than ever. He took part in frolics and got into scrapes. He tried for a scholarship and failed. He ran away from college, and was taken back ignominiously by his brother. At last, in 1749, he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, without any mark of distinction. He then went home to his mother's little cottage at Ballymahon[1] for two years.

5. In 1752, Goldsmith went to Edinburgh to study medicine; but he was better known among his fellow-students as a good story-teller, and as one who sang a capital Irish song, than for any distinction he earned in the college class-rooms. After spending two winters in the Scottish capital, he went to Leyden,[2] where he lived chiefly by teaching English. His careless, improvident habits still clung to him. One day he borrowed some money from a friend, and after spending nearly the whole of it on a parcel of rare tulip-roots as a present for his uncle in Ireland, he left Leyden "with a guinea in his pocket, but one shirt to his back, and a flute in his hand," to make the grand tour of Europe.

6. Between February 1755 and February 1756 he travelled through Flanders, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. Often, after trudging all day on foot, he played at night merry tunes on his flute before a peasant's cottage in the hope of earning a supper and a bed. For a time he acted as companion or tutor to a rich young man who was travelling on the Continent. In

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1 **Ballymahon,** a few miles south-east of Longford, in County Longford.

2 **Leyden,** a university town in the Netherlands, north of Rotterdam. The university was founded in 1575 to commemorate the brave resistance of the place when besieged by the Spaniards, and its relief by William of Orange, who cut the dikes and let the sea flow in to the wall of the town (1574).

Italy he earned a little money by disputing in the universities, as he afterwards made George Primrose do in the *Vicar of Wakefield*. Indeed the most striking scenes and characters in Goldsmith's writings are reminiscences of his own early life and experiences. It was probably during this journey that he received the degree of Bachelor of Medicine, on which his claim to the title of doctor rests.

7. After his twelvemonth's wandering he found his way to London, and there began that struggle in its troubled waters which closed only with his life. At first he made a desperate effort to gain a footing in his own profession—that of medicine. For a while he worked with mortar and pestle in an apothecary's shop on Fish Street Hill. He then began to practise among the poor of Southwark,[1] but failed to earn a living. For a time he was a reader and corrector for the press in a printing office. Then he became an usher in the school of a Dr. Milner in Peckham[2]—a position in which he was far from being happy.

8. One day Griffiths the bookseller, dining at Milner's, proposed to give Goldsmith board and a small salary if he would write for the *Monthly Review*. He accepted the offer, and contributed many papers to that periodical; but he complained that the bookseller, or his wife, tampered with every one of them. The engagement lasted only a few months, and then Goldsmith returned to his usher-life at Dr. Milner's.

9. He made his last effort to obtain permanent employment when he presented himself at Surgeons' Hall —in a suit of clothes borrowed on Griffiths's security— in order to pass as a surgeon's mate in the navy. Fortu-

1 **Southwark**, now part of London, on the southern or Surrey side of the Thames.

2 **Peckham**, in the south-east of London.

nately for English letters, he was "plucked." This final hope broken, he was driven to the pen once more, and thenceforth literature was his profession.

10. A garret in a miserable square called Green Arbour Court had lately become his home. It was a dirty room, furnished with a mean bed and a single wooden chair; and there he sat down on the night of his rejection at Surgeons' Hall to mourn over his sad fate. Four days later he hurried out, regardless of all but pity, to pawn the clothes he had got on Griffiths's security, in order to help his poor landlady, whose husband had just been seized by bailiffs.

11. In that room Goldsmith wrote many reviews and essays. There Bishop Percy[1] of the "Reliques" visited him, and found him writing his first important work, *An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe.* There he wrote his witty and graceful papers for *The Bee,* a Saturday paper which proved a failure. About the same time *The British Magazine,* edited by Smollett, was enriched with several essays from Goldsmith's busy pen. Among these were some of the most charming of his shorter pieces, such as *The Reverie in the Boar's Head at Eastcheap,* and *The Story of the Shabby Actor, picked up in St. James's Park.*

12. By-and-by there appeared in a newspaper called *The Public Ledger* a series of letters describing a Chinaman's impressions of English life. These letters by Goldsmith were afterwards republished with the title of *The Citizen of the World;* and if the hack of Green Arbour Court had produced nothing else, they would have entitled him to a high place among English classics.

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1 **Bishop Percy,** Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore in Ireland. He collected and edited old ballads, which he published in 1765, with the title, *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry.* He also wrote a poem entitled, *The Hermit of Warkworth.* (1728–1811.)

13. Goldsmith afterwards removed to Wine Office Court, and there, on the 31st of May 1761, the great Dr. Samuel Johnson ate his first supper at Goldsmith's table. Bishop Percy brought about the meeting; and Johnson, in honour of the occasion, went through the unusual ceremonies of powdering his wig and putting on clean linen.

14. Even more memorable was another visit which Goldsmith received from Johnson three years later in a country lodging at Islington, where the former had taken refuge from the din and the dinginess of Fleet Street. One morning, in 1764, an urgent message arrived from Goldsmith, begging Johnson to go to him immediately. With generous instinct, Johnson sent him a guinea, and himself followed as soon as possible.

15. He found that poor Goldsmith had been arrested for his rent by order of his landlady. A newly-opened bottle of Madeira wine stood on the table (proof that the guinea had been received), which Johnson wisely corked before he began to talk of what was to be done. Presently Goldsmith produced a manuscript from his desk, and Johnson sat down to examine it. It was *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Goldsmith's immortal story. Perceiving at a glance the merits of the work, Johnson went out and sold it to a bookseller for £60, and Goldsmith's troubles were at an end for the time.

16. Before the publication of *The Vicar of Wakefield* —fifteen months afterwards—Goldsmith had already become famous by the appearance of his beautiful poem, *The Traveller* (1765). Johnson said of it that "there had not been so fine a poem since Pope's time;" and a sister of Reynolds, the artist, after hearing it read, said that she "would never more think Dr. Goldsmith ugly," so lovely and lovable did the poem show the spirit to be

that dwelt under his rugged skin and his coarse, blunt features.

17. The great charm of *The Vicar of Wakefield* is its exquisite naturalness. No bad man could write a book so full of the soft sunshine and tender beauty of domestic life. It was coloured with the hues of childhood's memories; and the central figure in the group of shadows from the past, that came to cheer the poor London author in his lonely garret, was that of his dead father. Dr. Charles Goldsmith was the original, not only of Dr. Primrose in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, but also of the Man in Black of *The Citizen of the World*, and the Preacher of *The Deserted Village*.

18. His comedy, *The Good-Natured Man*, acted in 1768, brought him nearly £500. With characteristic improvidence, he scattered it to the winds at once. He bought fine chambers in the Middle Temple, which he furnished sumptuously; and there he gave expensive dinners and hilarious suppers. He was constantly in society, along with Johnson, Reynolds,[1] and Burke, and he lived far beyond his means.

19. In May 1770 appeared his finest poem, *The Deserted Village*. Its success was immediate and complete, five editions having been exhausted in four months. Like *The Vicar of Wakefield*, this exquisite poem is full of recollections of early years and scenes. The village —"sweet Auburn"—was that hamlet of Lissoy where his boyhood had been spent, and most of the characters described are portraits from the life.

20. Goldsmith's fame was now at its highest. The poet Gray, on hearing *The Deserted Village* read at Malvern, said with emphasis, "That man *is* a poet." But

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1 **Reynolds**, Sir Joshua, a famous portrait-painter (1723–1792). For Johnson and Burke, see Lives in the present volume.

debt now held Goldsmith fast in its terrible talons. He worked on, but he had to trade on the future—to draw heavy advances from his booksellers in order to meet the wants of the hour. His *History of England*, his *History of the Earth and Animated Nature*, his *Histories of Greece and Rome*, were merely the means of paying off old debts and of contracting new ones.

21. *She Stoops to Conquer*, his second and most successful comedy, was first acted in 1773, and it holds its place on the stage at the present day as one of the best specimens of old English comedy. The last flash of his genius was the short poem, *Retaliation*, written in reply to sneering epitaphs made on him by some of his friends one day at dinner. The most biting couplet was Garrick's :—

"Here lies poet Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll!"

Garrick was not spared in the reply, as the following couplets show :—

"On the stage he was natural, simple, affecting;
'Twas only that when he was off he was acting.
He cast off his friends as a huntsman his pack,
For he knew, when he pleased, he could whistle them back.
Of praise a mere glutton, he swallowed what came,
And the puff of a dunce he mistook it for fame;
Till his relish grown callous, almost to disease,
Who peppered the highest was surest to please."

22. With hands yet full of unfinished work, and overwhelmed with debt, Goldsmith lay down to die. An old illness seized him. Low fever set in. He took powders against the advice of his doctors, and he died after nine days' sickness on the 4th of April 1774. His last hours were clouded with the memory of his reckless life, and of his foolish, thriftless ways.

SUMMARY OF GOLDSMITH'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year. Age.

1728.....Born at Pallasmore.
1730... 2...Father removes to Lissoy.
1745...17...Sizar at Trinity College, Dublin.
1747...19...Death of his father.
1749...21...Takes B.A. degree—Goes to live with his mother at Ballymahon.
1752...24...Studies medicine at Edinburgh.
1754...26...At Leyden teaching English.
1755 } 27...Travels in Flanders, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy—
1756 } 28... Takes M.B. degree.
1756...28...Settles in London—Apothecary—Practice in Southwark—Printer's reader.
1757...29...Usher in Dr. Milner's School, Peckham—Writes for Griffiths in the *Monthly Review*—Returns to Milner's.
1758.. 30..."Plucked" at Surgeons' Hall—Lives in Green Arbour Court.
1759...31...Writes *An Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe*—Writes for *The Bee*, a weekly paper—Writes *Essays* in Smollett's *British Magazine*—Begins *The Citizen of the World*, letters in *The Public Ledger*—Lives in Wine Office Court.
1761...33...Dr. Samuel Johnson sups with Goldsmith.
1764...36...Johnson sells MS. of *The Vicar of Wakefield* for sixty pounds.
1765...37...*The Traveller* published.
1766...38...*The Vicar of Wakefield* published.
1768...40...*The Good-Natured Man*, comedy, acted—Buys chambers in Brick Court, Middle Temple.
1770...42...*The Deserted Village* published.
1773...45...*She Stoops to Conquer*, comedy, acted.
1774...46...*Retaliation* published—Died April 4th.

SELECTIONS FROM GOLDSMITH.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

[This delightful and touching picture of a decayed village, and of the recollections which it recalls, is not wholly fanciful. The village, "Sweet Auburn," was the little hamlet of Lissoy in West Meath, in Ireland, where Goldsmith spent his boyhood; but the description of the village life is more applicable to an English than to an Irish village. The decay, according to the poet, was caused by the whole of the land falling into the hands of one landlord—

"One only master grasps the whole domain;"

but the poet's teachings in matters of political economy are open to question. The "village preacher" is a portrait of the Rev. Charles Goldsmith, the poet's father, whose income was actually "forty pounds a year" at the time of the poet's birth. The village schoolmaster also has all the appearance of being a portrait "from the life." The language of the poem is eloquent, and its versification is smooth and regular.]

Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of th' plain,
Where health and plenty[1] cheered the labouring swain,[2]
Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:[3]
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm—
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!

1 **Health and plenty.** Lines 1-34 describe the village as it was, when the land was in the hands of those who tilled it, and before the "tyrant" landlord came in.

2 **The labouring swain,** the hard-working farmer.

3 **Delayed,**—used intransitively,—loitered.

How often have I blessed the coming day,
When toil remitting[1] lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree,
While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending[2] as the old surveyed;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round:
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band[3] inspired;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless[4] of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove:
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these
With sweet succession taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence[5] shed;
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn!
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand[6] is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage[7] stints thy smiling plain.

1 **Toil remitting,** "toil *being remitted,*" or suspended.

2 **The young contending.** An absolute phrase, with a clause depending on it—"as the old surveyed," or looked on.

3 **The mirthful band.** May be taken as the object both of "inspired," and of "tired" in the previous line.

4 **Mistrustless,** without mistrust or suspicion; unconscious.

5 **Influence,** power; originally the power which the planets were supposed to have on men and on the world. The term is taken from the ancient science of Astrology.

6 **The tyrant's hand,** the landlord's power. Here the poet begins to point at the cause of the decay of the village.

7 **Half a tillage,** only half the land being farmed, or under crops.

No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But choked with sedges works its weary way;[1]
Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern[2] guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried[3] cries.
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:[4]
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade—
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood[5] of ground maintained its man;
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more;
His best companions innocence and health,
And his best riches ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered: trade's unfeeling train[6]
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain:
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose;

---

1 **Works its weary way.** An example of alliteration, or head-rhyme.

2 **Bittern,** a kind of heron; a bird with long legs and neck and a long bill. The bittern is said to owe its name to its voice, which resembles that of the bull. [Mid Eng. *bitoure;* Low Lat. *butorious;* supposed to be a corruption of *bos,* ox, and *taurus,* bull.] The epithet "hollow-sounding" is therefore well-chosen.

3 **Unvaried,** monotonous.

4 **Where wealth accumulates, and men decay,** "Where property falls into the hands of a few men, and the population decreases."

5 **Rood,** the fourth part of an acre, so called from the *rod* used in measuring it.

6 **Trade's unfeeling train,** men who have made fortunes in commerce, have bought estates, and have treated harshly the labouring population.

And every want to luxury allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green—
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,[1]
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds,
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed,[2] return to view
Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

In all my wand'rings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and God has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;[3]
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose.
I still had hopes—for pride attends us still—
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt and all I saw.
And as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

---

1 **Seek a kinder shore,** emigrate across the sea.

2 **Many a year elapsed.** An absolute phrase.

3 **To lay me down,** to spend his closing years, and to be buried, amid the scenes of his childhood.

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How blest is he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labour with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine or tempt the dangerous deep;
Nor surly porter stands, in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine[1] from the gate:
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past!

Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
There, as I passed with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below;
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd[2] that lowed to meet their young;
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school;
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind.
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind;—
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,[3]

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1 **Imploring famine**, starving beggars: the abstract put for the concrete, a form of *metonymy*, or the figure of change.

2 **The sober herd, etc.** A delightful picture of evening scenes and sounds in a village.

3 **Fluctuate in the gale**, rise and fall as they are borne on the wind.

No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
For all the blooming flush of life is fled,—
All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses[1] spread,
To pick her wintry fagot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn—
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain!

Near yonder copse,[2] where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild—
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,[3]
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich[4] with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place;
Unpractised he[5] to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;[6]
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.[7]
His house was known to all the vagrant train,[8]
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;

1 **Mantling cresses,** cresses spread over the surface like a mantle. The old woman makes her living by gathering and selling water-cresses. (Mantle is from Fr. *manteau;* Lat. *mantellum,* a napkin.)

2 **Copse,** also *coppice,* a wood of small trees; so called (from Fr. *couper,* to cut) because the trees are periodically *cut down* for their bark or for wood.

3 **The place disclose,** indicate the site of the house.

4 **Passing rich,** exceedingly rich; implying that his wants were few, and that he was content.

5 **Unpractised he,** "he *was* not accustomed."

6 **By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour,** he was not a time-server.

7 **Raise....rise.** A transitive and an intransitive verb from the same root. Other examples are, to *set* and to *sit,* to *fell* and to *fall.* The transitive verb has the meaning of to cause or make: to *raise,* is to make to *rise;* to *set,* to make to *sit;* to *fell,* to make to *fall.*

8 **The vagrant train,** the gipsies, wandering tribes of people who live by tinkering, fortune-telling, and begging.

The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift,[1] now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away,
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was[2] his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all
And as a bird[3] each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,[4]
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;

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1 **Spendthrift**, one who *spends* his *thrift*, or his gains.

2 **Was.** The nominative to this verb is, "To relieve the wretched."

3 **As a bird . . . skies.** A very fine simile.

4 **Dismayed.** A transitive verb without an object. Supply *the sufferer*, or *the dying person.*

Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools who came to scoff remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran;
E'en children followed, with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed;
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven:
As some tall cliff[1] that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm;[2]
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.[3]

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay[4]—
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view,—
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.
Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.

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1 **Cliff.** Nominative to "swells" and "leaves." The grammatical structure of the sentence is rather loose, though the meaning is plain enough.

2 **As some tall cliff....storm.** Must be construed as adverbial clauses of likeness to "had rest in heaven."—**Midway leaves the storm,** the storm does not reach more than half way up the cliff; its summit is serene.

3 **Though round its breast .... its head,** is a new principal sentence arising out of the adverbial clause of likeness.

4 **Unprofitably gay,** bearing blossoms, but not fruit.

The village all declared how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge.[1]
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For e'en though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thund'ring sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew
That one small head could carry all he knew.
But past is all his fame; the very spot
Where many a time he triumphed is forgot.

Near yonder thorn that lifts its head on high,
Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts[2] inspired,
Where graybeard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen[3] talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale[4] went round.
Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour-splendours of that festive place—
The white-washed wall, the nicely-sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the door;
The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules,[5] the royal game of goose;[6]

1 **Gauge,** measure the contents of casks; act as a gauger or excise officer.

2 **Nut-brown draughts,** draughts of nut-brown ale.

3 **Village statesmen,** village politicians.

4 **News much older than their ale.** News took a long time to travel in Goldsmith's time. There were no penny or halfpenny newspapers.

5 **The twelve good rules.** A sheet which used to be hung up in public-houses, on which were printed rules for the conduct of life, such as, "Tell no secrets," "Keep no bad company," etc.

6 **Royal game of goose.** A game somewhat like backgammon, played with dice and counters. On certain divisions of the board a goose was drawn: hence the name of the game.

The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen[1] boughs, and flowers and fennel[2] gay;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

Vain transitory splendours! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion[3] from its fall?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance[4] to the poor man's heart;
Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care;
No more the farmer's news,[5] the barber's tale,[6]
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength and lean to hear;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round;
Nor the coy maid, half-willing to be pressed,
Shall kiss the cup[7] to pass it to the rest.

Yes! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm than all the gloss of art;
Spontaneous joys, where nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway:
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,[8]
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.

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1 **Aspen**, the poplar.

2 **Fennel**, a plant with a pungent smell.

3 **Reprieve the tottering mansion.** An unusual use of *reprieve*, which generally has a personal object,—to reprieve a criminal. It is a doublet or second form of *reprove*, and was used in Mid Eng. in the sense of reject, disallow.

4 **An hour's importance**, the importance which attaches even to a poor man when giving his orders in an inn.

5 **The farmer's news**, picked up at market.

6 **The barber's tale**, picked up in visiting the houses of gentlemen.

7 **Kiss the cup**, touch it with her lips, without drinking. Compare Ben Jonson's

"Leave but a kiss within the cup,
And I'll not look for wine."

8 **The vacant mind**, the mind free from care. In line 122, "vacant" means empty, in the sense of thoughtless.

But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,[1]
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,
In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain;
And even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey[2]
The rich man's power increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge how wide the limits stand[3]
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,[4]
And shouting Folly hails them from her shore;
Hoards even beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a place that many poor[5] supplied;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds;
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
Has robbed the neighbouring fields of half their growth;
His seat, where solitary spots are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies:[6]
While thus the land, adorned for pleasure, all
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

1 **Masquerade**, a ball at which masks and fancy dresses are worn.

2 **Survey**, see.

3 **How wide the limits stand**, "what a great difference there is."

4 **Freighted ore**, a freight consisting of ore,—wealth.

5 **Poor**, object of "supplied."

6 **Around the world . . . supplies.** "The necessaries of life are sent over the world, and luxuries are brought back in exchange." There is nothing wrong in that. The interchange of the products of different countries gives rise to commerce. Goldsmith's sentiments are generous, but his political economy is not always sound.

As some fair female,[1] unadorned and plain,
Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
Slights every borrowed charm that dress supplies,
Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
But when those charms are past—for charms are frail—
When time advances, and when lovers fail,
She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,[2]
In all the glaring impotence of dress.
Thus fares the land, by luxury betrayed:
In nature's simplest charms at first arrayed;
But verging to decline, its splendours rise,
Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
While, scourged by famine, from the smiling land
The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
The country blooms—a garden and a grave!

Where then, ah! where shall poverty reside,
To 'scape the pressure of contiguous[3] pride?
If to some common's fenceless limits[4] strayed
He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
And e'en the bare-worn common is denied.[5]

If to the city sped[6]—what waits him there?
To see profusion that he must not share;
To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
To pamper luxury, and thin mankind;
To see each joy the sons of pleasure know,
Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe;

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1 **As some fair female.** The simile extends from line 287 to line 294; then follows the principal clause.

2 **Solicitous to bless,** eager to grant favours; the antithesis to "secure to please" in line 288.

3 **Contiguous,** touching; near.

4 **Common's fenceless limits.** The common is fenceless—without fences—because it is *common* property.

5 **The bare-worn common is denied.** It is true that commons have frequently been seized or encroached on by grasping land-owners.

6 **If to the city sped,** "If the poor man has gone for refuge to the city."

Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade.
There the pale artist[1] plies the sickly trade;
Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
The dome[2] where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
Here, richly decked, admits the gorgeous train;
Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy;[3]
Sure these denote one universal joy!
Are these thy serious thoughts?—Ah! turn thine eyes
Where the poor houseless shivering female lies,.....
And, pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
When idly first, ambitious of the town,
She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Do thine, sweet Auburn! thine the loveliest train,
Do thy fair tribes[4] participate her pain?
E'en now, perhaps, by cold and hunger led,
At proud men's doors they ask a little bread.

Ah, no! To distant climes,[5] a dreary scene,
Where half the convex world intrudes between,
Through torrid tracts with fainting steps they go,
Where wild Altama[6] murmurs to their woe.
Far different there from all that charmed before,
The various terrors of that horrid shore—
Those blazing suns that dart a downward ray,
And fiercely shed intolerable day;

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1 **Artist,** artisan; workman.

2 **Dome,** fine house: a part put for the whole, as the hull for the ship. The figure is called *synecdoche*.

3 **No troubles e'er annoy.** Said in irony.

4 **Fair tribes,** female inhabitants.

5 **To distant climes.... they go,** "they emigrate to America."

6 **Where wild Altama, etc,** in the North American colonies. The Altama is a river in Georgia.

Those matted woods where birds forget to sing,
But silent bats in drowsy clusters cling;
Those poisonous fields[1] with rank luxuriance crowned,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake;
Where crouching tigers wait their hapless prey,
And savage men more murderous still than they;
While oft in whirls the mad tornado[2] flies,
Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies.
Far different these from every former scene,
The cooling brook, the grassy-vested green,
The breezy covert of the warbling grove,
That only sheltered thefts of harmless love.

Good Heaven! what sorrows gloomed[3] that parting day,
That called them from their native walks away;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,[4]
Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last[5]—
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main[6]—
And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.

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1 **Poisonous fields, etc.** These "terrors," however characteristic of Goldsmith's time, have disappeared, or have been greatly reduced, before the advance of civilization and settled government. Migration to America is not now regarded as a great hardship.

2 **Tornado,** a violent tempest of wind; a whirlwind.

3 **Gloomed,** made gloomy; used as a transitive verb.

4 **Every pleasure past.** An absolute phrase.

5 **Looked their last,** "took their last look."

6 **Western main,** the Atlantic Ocean; *main* is the great or *main* sea. [Lat. *magnus.*]

His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for a father's arms.
With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blessed the cot where every pleasure rose,
And kissed her thoughtless[1] babes with many a tear,
And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.[2]

"O luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
Kingdoms, by thee to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own:
At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till, sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.[3]

Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks,[4] as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness[5] are there,

1 **Thoughtless**, not aware of their sorrows.
2 **Silent manliness of grief**, silent grief which befits a man.
3 **Spread a ruin round**, "spread ruin around."
4 **Methinks**, "it seems to me."
5 **Connubial tenderness**, the kindness of wife to husband, and of husband to wife.

And piety[1] with wishes placed above,
And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
Unfit, in these degenerate times of shame,
To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame:
Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
Thou found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
Thou guide, by which the noble arts excel,
Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
Farewell; and oh! where'er thy voice be tried,
On Torno's[2] cliffs, or Pambamarca's[3] side,
Whether where equinoctial[4] fervours glow,
Or winter wraps the polar world in snow,
Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
Redress the rigours of the inclement clime;
Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain;
Teach him that states of native strength possessed,
Though very poor, may still be very blest;
That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,[5]
As ocean sweeps the laboured mole away;
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

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1 **Piety,** reverence for parents.

2 **Torno.** The Tornea is a river between Sweden and Russia. It rises in Lake Tornea, in the Kiolen Mountains. Compare,

"Still pressing on beyond Tornea's lake."
Thomson's *Winter.*

3 **Pambamarca,** a mountain near Quito, in South America. The line means, either in polar regions or in the tropics.

4 **Equinoctial,** tropical; equatorial would have been a better epithet.

5 **Trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay.** This opinion is open to question. British prosperity is based on commerce.

THE VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.

[*The Vicar of Wakefield* differed from the novels of the eighteenth century —those of Smollett and Sterne, for example—in its simplicity and naturalness, in the admirable ease and clearness of its style, and in the moral goodness which it supported. Professor Masson says: "How simple this *Vicar of Wakefield* was, how humorous, how pathetic, how graceful in its manner, how humane in every pulse of its meaning, how truly and deeply good!"]

1. Dr. Charles Primrose, a simple-minded, earnest clergyman, was vicar of Wakefield. He lived in the vicarage with his wife Deborah, and his family of two daughters, Olivia and Sophia, and four sons, George, Moses, Dick, and Bill. As he had a private fortune of some fourteen thousand pounds, he made over the proceeds of his living (thirty-five pounds a year) to the orphans and widows of the clergy of the diocese.

2. George Primrose, the vicar's eldest son, was engaged to be married to Arabella Wilmot, the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, who was in circumstances to give her a large fortune. The vicar's great hobby was the Whistonian controversy as to whether a priest of the Church of England may marry oftener than once. He prided himself on being a strict monogamist.[1] His friend Mr. Wilmot took the opposite side, and with good reason, as he had already buried three wives and was courting a fourth. During the preparations for his son's wedding Dr. Primrose engaged in a discussion with Mr. Wilmot on his favourite topic. Discussion passed into recrimination, and recrimination into a violent quarrel. Just then, the vicar was informed that his fortune was gone, the merchant in whose hands it was lodged having absconded. The result was that the engagement was broken off.

3. The vicar removed with his family to another cure[2] at some

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1 **Monogamist,** a man married to one wife only at one time. A bigamist is a man married to two wives (or a woman married to two husbands) at the same time. In the text, however, monogamist is used to signify a man only once married.

2 **Cure,** a cure of souls, a spiritual charge.

distance, which yielded only fifteen pounds a year; but there was attached to it a small farm, by managing which with the help of his family he hoped to increase his income. On their way to their new home they met with a Mr. Burchell, who began by borrowing money from the vicar, and who afterwards became a great friend of the family. George, having been bred a scholar, was sent to London, in the hope that he might be able to help the family by his wits.

4. Dr. Primrose had some difficulty in getting his wife and daughters to realize their reduced circumstances. They expected to indulge their love of finery as much as formerly. The good vicar thus described their first appearance in the new parish :—

5. "The first Sunday in particular their behaviour served to mortify me. I had desired my girls the preceding night to be dressed early the next day, for I always loved to be at church a good while before the rest of the congregation. They punctually obeyed my directions; but when we were to assemble in the morning at breakfast, down came my wife and my daughters dressed out in all their former splendour, their hair plastered up with pomatum, their faces patched[1] to taste, their trains bundled up in a heap behind and rustling at every motion. I could not help smiling at their vanity, particularly that of my wife, from whom I expected more discretion. In this exigence, therefore, my only resource was to order my son, with an important air, to call our coach. The girls were amazed at the command, but I repeated it with more solemnity than before. 'Surely, my dear, you jest,' cried my wife; 'we can walk it perfectly well. We want no coach to carry us now.'—'You mistake, child,' returned I, 'we do want a coach; for if we walk to church in this trim, the very children in the parish will hoot after us.'—'Indeed,' replied my wife, 'I always imagined that my Charles was fond of seeing his children neat and handsome about him.'—'You may be as neat as you please,' interrupted I, 'and I

1 **Patched**, having small black patches stuck over them, as was common in the last century.

shall love you the better for it; but all this is not neatness but frippery. These rufflings, and pinkings, and patchings will only make us hated by all the wives of our neighbours. No, my children,' continued I more gravely, 'these gowns may be altered into something of a plainer cut, for finery is very unbecoming in us, who want the means of decency. I do not know whether such flouncing and shredding is becoming even in the rich, if we consider, upon a moderate calculation, that the nakedness of the indigent world might be clothed from the trimmings of the vain.'[1]

6. "This remonstrance had the proper effect. They went with great composure that very instant to change their dress, and the next day I had the satisfaction of finding my daughters, at their own request, employed in cutting up their trains into Sunday waistcoats for Dick and Bill, the two little ones; and what was still more satisfactory, the gowns seemed improved by this curtailing."

7. In course of time they became acquainted with Squire Thornhill, the owner of the surrounding estate, which he had received from his uncle, Sir William Thornhill, during his life-time. The gay and jovial squire became a great friend of the family, and won the affections of Olivia, the eldest daughter. The efforts of the Primroses to make an appearance before the squire led to a great deal of pinching. The honest vicar distrusted him, and disapproved of the court paid to him; but his wife had resolved to secure him as a son-in-law. Mr. Burchell was also a frequent visitor, and for him Sophia showed a great liking—to her father's surprise, for he regarded Burchell as a man of broken fortunes, to whom the squire's chaplain was in his opinion much preferable.

8. Mrs. Primrose was now bent on schemes of future conquest. In the words of the vicar, "as we were now to hold up our heads a little higher in the world, my wife suggested

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1 **The nakedness, etc.** An example of epigram,—a short, pointed, or sarcastic saying.

that it would be proper to sell the colt, which was grown old, at a neighbouring fair, and buy us a horse that would carry us single, or double upon an occasion, and make a pretty appearance at church or upon a visit. This at first I opposed stoutly; but it was as stoutly defended. However, as I weakened, my antagonist gained strength, till at last it was resolved to part with him.

9. "As the fair happened on the following day, I had intentions of going myself; but my wife persuaded me that I had got a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. 'No, my dear,' said she; 'our son Moses is a discreet boy, and can buy and sell to a very good advantage. You know all our great bargains are of his purchasing. He always stands out and higgles, and actually tires them till he gets a bargain.'

10. "As I had some opinion of my son's prudence, I was willing enough to intrust him with this commission; and the next morning I perceived his sisters mighty busy in fitting out Moses for the fair; trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet being over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the colt, with a deal box before him to bring home groceries in.[1]

11. "He had on a coat made of that cloth they call 'thunder-and-lightning,' which, though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away. His waistcoat was of gosling green, and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black ribbon. We all followed him several paces from the door, bawling after him, 'Good luck! good luck!' till we could see him no longer.

12. "He was scarce gone when Mr. Thornhill's butler came to congratulate us upon our good fortune, saying that he overheard his young master mention our names with great com-

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1 **To bring home groceries in.** This is a loose colloquial construction for "in which to bring home groceries."

mendation." Then came a note from two ladies who were visiting the squire, holding out hopes of finding situations for Olivia and Sophia in London.

13. "This was to be our visiting day. The next that came was Mr. Burchell, who had been at the fair. He brought my little ones a pennyworth of gingerbread each, which my wife undertook to keep for them, and give them by letters at a time. He brought my daughters also a couple of boxes, in which they might keep wafers, snuff, patches, or even money, when they got it. My wife was usually fond of a weasel-skin purse, as being the most lucky; but this by the bye.

14. "We had still a regard for Mr. Burchell; nor could we now avoid communicating our happiness to him, and asking his advice: although we seldom followed advice, we were all ready enough to ask it. When he read the note from the two ladies, he shook his head, and observed that an affair of this sort demanded the utmost circumspection. This air of diffidence highly displeased my wife. 'I never doubted, sir,' cried she, 'your readiness to be against my daughters and me. You have more circumspection than is wanted. However, I fancy, when we come to ask advice, we will apply to persons who seem to have made use of it themselves.'—'Whatever my own conduct may have been, madam,' replied he, 'is not the present question, though, as I have made no use of advice myself, I should in conscience give it to those that will.'

15. "As I was apprehensive this answer might draw on a repartee, making up by abuse what it wanted in wit, I changed the subject, by seeming to wonder what could keep our son so long at the fair, as it was now almost nightfall.

16. "'Never mind our son,' cried my wife; 'depend upon it he knows what he is about. I'll warrant we'll never see him sell his hen of a rainy day.[1] I have seen him buy such bargains as would amaze one. I'll tell you a good story about

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1 **Sell his hen of a rainy day,** when it would appear shabby and fetch a low price.

that, that will make you split your sides with laughing.—But as I live, yonder comes Moses, without a horse, and the box on his back.'

17. "As she spoke, Moses came slowly on foot, and sweating under the deal box, which he had strapped round his shoulders like a pedler. 'Welcome, welcome, Moses! Well, my boy, what have you brought us from the fair?'—'I have brought you myself,' cried Moses, with a sly look, and resting the box on the dresser.—'Ay, Moses,' cried my wife, 'that we know; but where is the horse?'

18. "'I have sold him,' cried Moses, 'for three pounds five shillings and twopence.'—'Well done, my good boy,' returned she; 'I knew you would touch them off. Between ourselves, three pounds five shillings and twopence is no bad day's work. Come, let us have it then.'—'I have brought back no money,' cried Moses again. 'I have laid it all out in a bargain, and here it is,' pulling out a bundle from his breast; 'here they are; a gross of green spectacles, with silver rims and shagreen cases.'

19. "'A gross of green spectacles!' repeated my wife in a faint voice. 'And you have parted with the colt, and brought us back nothing but a gross of green paltry spectacles!'—'Dear mother,' cried the boy, 'why won't you listen to reason? I had them a dead bargain, or I should not have brought them. The silver rims alone will sell for double the money.'—'A fig for the silver rims!' cried my wife in a passion: 'I dare swear they won't sell for above half the money at the rate of broken silver, five shillings an ounce.'

20. "'You need be under no uneasiness,' cried I, 'about selling the rims, for they are not worth sixpence; for I perceive they are only copper varnished over.'—'What!' cried my wife; 'not silver! the rims not silver!'—'No,' cried I; 'no more silver than your saucepan.'—'And so,' returned she, 'we have parted with the colt, and have only got a gross of green spectacles, with copper rims and shagreen cases! A

murrain take[1] such trumpery! The blockhead has been imposed upon, and should have known his company better.'

21. "'There, my dear,' cried I, 'you are wrong; he should not have known them at all.'—'Marry,[2] hang the idiot!' returned she, 'to bring me such stuff. If I had them, I would throw them in the fire.'—'There again you are wrong, my dear,' cried I; 'for though they be copper, we will keep them by us, as copper spectacles, you know, are better than nothing.'

22. "By this time the unfortunate Moses was undeceived. He now saw that he had been imposed upon by a prowling sharper, who, observing his figure, had marked him for an easy prey. I therefore asked the circumstances of his deception. He sold the horse, it seems, and walked the fair in search of another. A reverend-looking man brought him to a tent, under pretence of having one to sell.

23. "'Here,' continued Moses, 'we met another man, very well dressed, who desired to borrow twenty pounds upon these, saying that he wanted money, and would dispose of them for a third of the value. The first gentleman, who pretended to be my friend, whispered me to buy them, and cautioned me not to let so good an offer pass. I sent for Mr. Flamborough, and they talked him up as finely as they did me; and so at last we were persuaded to buy the two gross between us.'"

24. There followed a quarrel with Mr. Burchell, whose interference had spoiled the scheme already referred to for sending the vicar's daughters to London with the squire's friends.

25. "Whatever might have been Sophia's sensations, the rest of the family was easily consoled for Mr. Burchell's absence by the company of our landlord, whose visits now became more frequent and longer. Though he had been disappointed in procuring my daughters the amusements of the town, as he designed, he took every opportunity of supplying them with those little recreations which our retirement would admit of.

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1 **A murrain take,** "plague take;" a mild oath. "Murrain" is an infectious disease [of cattle.
2 **Marry,—that is, "By Mary."**

26. "He usually came in the morning, and while my son and I followed our occupations abroad, he sat with the family at home, and amused them by describing the town, with every part of which he was particularly acquainted. He could repeat all the observations that were retailed in the atmosphere of the playhouses, and had all the good things of the high wits by rote long before they made their way into the jest-books.

27. "The intervals between conversation were employed in teaching my daughters piquet,[1] or sometimes in setting my two little ones to box, to make them *sharp*, as he called it; but the hopes of having him for a son-in-law in some measure blinded us to all his imperfections. It must be owned that my wife laid a thousand schemes to entrap him; or, to speak more tenderly, used every art to magnify the merit of her daughter. If the cakes at tea eat short and crisp, they were made by Olivia; if the gooseberry wine was well knit, the gooseberries were of her gathering; it was her fingers which gave the pickles their peculiar green; and, in the composition of a pudding, it was her judgment that mixed the ingredients. Then the poor woman would sometimes tell the squire that she thought him and Olivia extremely of a size, and would bid both stand up to see which was tallest.

28. "These instances of cunning, which she thought impenetrable, yet which everybody saw through, were very pleasing to our benefactor, who gave every day some new proofs of his passion, which, though they had not arisen to proposals of marriage, yet we thought fell but little short of it; and his slowness was attributed sometimes to native bashfulness, and sometimes to his fear of offending his uncle. An occurrence, however, which happened soon after put it beyond a doubt that he designed to become one of our family; my wife even regarded it as an absolute promise.

29. "My wife and daughters happening to return a visit at neighbour Flamborough's, found that the family had lately

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1 **Piquet**, a game at cards.

got their pictures drawn by a limner,[1] who travelled the country and took likenesses for fifteen shillings a-head. As this family and ours had long a sort of rivalry in point of taste, our spirit took the alarm at this stolen march upon us; and, notwithstanding all I could say, and I said much, it was resolved that we should have our pictures done too.

30. "Having, therefore, engaged the limner, — for what could I do?—our next deliberation was to show the superiority of our taste in the attitudes. As for our neighbour's family, there were seven of them, and they were drawn with seven oranges,—a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world. We desired to have something in a brighter style; and, after many debates, at length came to a unanimous resolution of being drawn together in one large historical family piece. This would be cheaper, since one frame would serve for all; and it would be infinitely more genteel, for all families of any taste were now drawn in the same manner.

31. "As we did not immediately recollect an historical subject to hit us, we were contented each with being drawn as independent historical figures. My wife desired to be represented as Venus, and the painter was desired not to be too frugal of his diamonds in her stomacher and hair. Her two little ones were to be as Cupids by her side; while I, in my gown and band, was to present her with my books on the Whistonian controversy. Olivia would be drawn as an Amazon, sitting upon a bank of flowers, dressed in a green joseph,[2] richly laced with gold, and a whip in her hand. Sophia was to be a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter could put in for nothing; and Moses was to be dressed out with a hat and white feathers.

32. "Our taste so much pleased the squire that he insisted

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1 **Limner**, a portrait-painter. To *limn*, to paint, is from Fr. *enluminer*, to illuminate.

2 **Joseph**, a riding habit. The unconscious grotesqueness of the design is charming, and equally so is the artlessness of the vicar's description of it.

on being put in as one of the family, in the character of Alexander the Great, at Olivia's feet. This was considered by us all as an indication of his desire to be introduced into the family; nor could we refuse his request. The painter was therefore set to work, and, as he wrought with assiduity and expedition, in less than four days the whole was completed. The piece was large; and it must be owned he did not spare his colours, for which my wife gave him great encomiums. We were all perfectly satisfied with his performance; but an unfortunate circumstance, which had not occurred till the picture was finished, now struck us with dismay. It was so very large that we had no place in the house to fix it. How we all came to disregard so material a point is inconceivable; but, certain it is, we had been all greatly remiss.

33. "The picture, therefore, instead of gratifying our vanity, as we hoped, leaned in a most mortifying manner against the kitchen wall, where the canvas was stretched and painted, much too large to be got through any of the doors. It was the jest of all our neighbours. One compared it to Robinson Crusoe's long boat, too large to be removed; another thought it more resembled a reel in a bottle; some wondered how it could be got out, but still more were amazed how it ever got in."

34. Mrs. Primrose being a great schemer, now thought to force the squire to declare himself by pretending to ask his advice in the choice of a husband for Olivia. In the hope of arousing his jealousy, she suggested their neighbour farmer Williams as a suitable match. The squire warmly condemned the proposal, for reasons which, he said, laying his hand on his bosom, "lay too deep for discovery." Olivia, by her mother's advice, played off the one suitor against the other. While the family were speculating as to which would be successful, they were startled with the news that Olivia had eloped —"gone off with two gentlemen in a post-chaise." Mr. Burchell was suspected; but the real culprit was Squire Thornhill, though that was not known at the time.

35. Having got a clue to the whereabouts of the runaways, the vicar set off to search for his lost child. In the midst of his strange adventures, he met Miss Arabella Wilmot, who was now engaged to be married to Squire Thornhill. He went with her to see a company of strolling players, being attracted by the announcement of the first appearance of a young gentleman. The young gentleman turned out to be the vicar's son George, of whom he had heard nothing for three years. At sight of his father and his lover, George broke down and left the stage. He accompanied them to the house at which they were staying, and there met by-and-by his rival Squire Thornhill. Under the pretence of doing a service to George, the squire procured for him a commission in the army. But his real design was to send George out of the country, as the regiment to which he was appointed was under orders for the West Indies.

36. On his way home, the vicar found his lost daughter in a wayside inn, wretched and penniless. From her he learned the truth about Squire Thornhill's villany, and about Mr. Burchell's good intentions. He was relieved to hear that she was married by a priest in orders, though there was reason to suspect that it was only a mock marriage. He resolved to take Olivia home. When they were within five miles of their house, he left Olivia at an inn for the night, while he went on to prepare the family for her reception.

37. "And now my heart caught new sensations of pleasure the nearer I approached that peaceful mansion. As a bird that had been frighted from its nest, my affections outwent my haste, and hovered round my little fireside with all the rapture of expectation. I called up the many fond things I had to say, and anticipated the welcome I was to receive. I already felt my wife's tender embrace, and smiled at the joy of my little ones. As I walked but slowly, the night waned apace. The labourers of the day were all retired to rest; the lights were out in every cottage; no sounds were heard but of the shrilling cock, and the deep-mouthed watch-dog, at hollow distance. I

approached my little abode of pleasure, and, before I was within a furlong of the place, our honest mastiff came running to welcome me.

38. "It was now near midnight that I came to knock at my door: all was still and silent. My heart dilated with unutterable happiness, when, to my amazement, I saw the house bursting out in a blaze of fire, and every aperture red with conflagration. I gave a loud convulsive outcry, and fell upon the pavement insensible. This alarmed my son, who had, till this, been asleep; and he, perceiving the flames, instantly waked my wife and daughter; and all running out naked and wild with apprehension, recalled me to life with their anguish. But it was only to objects of new terror; for the flames had by this time caught the roof of our dwelling, part after part continuing to fall in, while the family stood, with silent agony, looking on as if they enjoyed the blaze.

39. "I gazed upon them and upon it by turns, and then looked round me for my two little ones; but they were not to be seen. Oh misery! 'Where,' cried I, 'where are my little ones?'—'They are burnt to death in the flames,' said my wife, calmly, 'and I will die with them.' That moment I heard the cry of the babes within, who were just awaked by the fire, and nothing could have stopped me. 'Where, where are my children?' cried I, rushing through the flames, and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined, 'Where are my little ones?'—'Here, dear papa, here we are,' cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and snatched them through the fire as fast as possible, while, just as I was got out, the roof sank in. 'Now,' cried I, holding up my children, 'now let the flames burn on, and all my possessions perish. Here they are; I have saved my treasure. Here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall yet be happy.' We kissed our little darlings a thousand times; they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns.

40. "I now stood a calm spectator of the flames; and, after some time, began to perceive that my arm to the shoulder was scorched in a terrible manner. It was, therefore, out of my power to give my son any assistance, either in attempting to save our goods, or preventing the flames spreading to our corn. By this time the neighbours were alarmed, and came running to our assistance; but all they could do was to stand like us, spectators of the calamity.

41. "My goods, among which were the notes I had reserved for my daughters' fortunes, were entirely consumed, except a box with some papers that stood in the kitchen, and two or three things more of little consequence which my son brought away in the beginning. The neighbours contributed, however, what they could to lighten our distress. They brought us clothes, and furnished one of our outhouses with kitchen utensils; so that by daylight we had another, though a wretched dwelling, to retire to. My honest next neighbour and his children were not the least assiduous in providing us with everything necessary, and offering whatever consolation untutored benevolence could suggest."

42. To this miserable abode Olivia was brought home the next day by her brother and sister. Her mother received her with coldness and severity. The poor girl's distress was deepened by the certain news which reached her of Squire Thornhill's approaching marriage with Miss Wilmot. Mr. Thornhill called next day and made light of his late excursion with Olivia. In great wrath, the vicar denounced him as a wretch, a liar, and a reptile, and ordered him to leave the house. The squire retaliated by sending his steward to demand the rent of his house and farm. As the vicar was unable to pay it, he was sent to gaol.

43. There he met an old acquaintance. "As I was sitting in a corner of the gaol, in a pensive posture, one of my fellow-prisoners came up, and sitting by me entered into conversation. It was my constant rule in life never to avoid the conversation of any man who seemed to desire it; for if good, I might profit

by his instruction, and if bad, he might be assisted by mine. I found this to be a knowing man, of strong unlettered sense, but a thorough knowledge of the world, as it is called, or, more properly speaking, of human nature on the wrong side. He asked me if I had taken care to provide myself with a bed, which was a circumstance I had never once attended to.

44. "'That's unfortunate,' cried he, 'as you are allowed here nothing but straw, and your apartment is very large and cold. However, you seem to be something of a gentleman, and as I have been one myself in my time, part of my bed-clothes are heartily at your service.'

45. "I thanked him, professing my surprise at finding such humanity in a gaol in misfortunes; adding, to let him see that I was a scholar, that the sage ancient seemed to understand the value of company in affliction when he said, *Ton kosmon airē, ei dos ton etairon;*[1] and, in fact,' continued I, 'what is the world if it affords only solitude?'

46. "'You talk of the world, sir,' returned my fellow-prisoner; 'the world is in its dotage, and yet the cosmogony or creation of the world has puzzled the philosophers of every age. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world! Sanchoniathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words, *Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to pan*,[2] which implies—'—'I ask pardon, sir,' cried I, 'for interrupting so much learning, but I think I have heard all this before. Have I not had the pleasure of once seeing you at Wellbridge fair, and is not your name Ephraim Jenkinson?' At this demand he only sighed. 'I suppose you must recollect,' resumed I, 'one Doctor Primrose, from whom you bought a horse?'

47. "He now at once recollected me, for the gloominess of the place and the approaching night had prevented his distinguishing my features before. 'Yes, sir,' returned Mr. Jen-

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1 **Ton kosmon, etc.** "You may bear with the world if it gives you a companion."

2 **Anarchon, etc.** "For everything is without beginning and without end."

kinson, 'I remember you perfectly well. I bought a horse, but forgot to pay for him. Your neighbour Flamborough is the only prosecutor I am any way afraid of at the next assizes, for he intends to swear positively against me as a coiner. I am heartily sorry, sir, I ever deceived you, or indeed any man; for you see,' continued he, showing his shackles, 'what my tricks have brought me to.'

48. "'Well, sir,' replied I, 'your kindness in offering me assistance when you could expect no return shall be repaid with my endeavours to soften, or totally suppress, Mr. Flamborough's evidence, and I will send my son to him for that purpose the first opportunity; nor do I in the least doubt but he will comply with my request; and as to my own evidence, you need be under no uneasiness about that.'

49. "'Well, sir,' cried he, 'all the return I can make shall be yours. You shall have more than half my bed-clothes to-night, and I'll take care to stand your friend in the prison, where I think I have some influence.'

50. "I thanked him, and could not avoid being surprised at the present youthful change in his aspect, for at the time I had seen him before he appeared at least sixty. 'Sir,' answered he, 'you are little acquainted with the world. I had at that time false hair, and have learnt the art of counterfeiting every age from seventeen to seventy. Ah, sir! had I but bestowed half the pains in learning a trade that I have in learning to be a scoundrel, I might have been a rich man at this day. But, rogue as I am, still I may be your friend, and that perhaps when you least expect it.'"

51. This turned out to be true, for it was by Jenkinson that the squire's villanies were discovered; but the good vicar's calamities are not yet at an end. News was brought to him that his daughter Olivia had died of a broken heart, and that his daughter Sophia had been carried off by villains. His son George was brought into the gaol in irons, charged with having challenged the squire to fight a duel, and with having wounded one of his servants sent to arrest him.

52. The first break in the cloud was the arrival of Sophia, along with Mr. Burchell, who had rescued her from the villains who carried her off. Mr. Burchell presently discovered himself as Sir William Thornhill, to the confusion of Mrs. Primrose, who remembered her former familiarity toward so great a man, and of Sophia, who perceived that in gaining a friend she had lost a lover. From sundry hints given, Jenkinson identified the man who carried off Sophia as Thomas Baxter, an old confederate of the squire's, and two turnkeys were at once despatched to fetch him. Meantime Squire Thornhill made his appearance, desiring to see his uncle, "in order to vindicate his innocence and honour."

53. The squire defended himself with great boldness and effrontery, until he was confronted with Jenkinson and Baxter. Then he shrank back abashed; and well he might, for their evidence convicted him of many villanies, and especially of the carrying off of Olivia and Sophia. The next to arrive on the scene was Miss Arabella Wilmot, who rejected the squire's hand, and thanked Heaven for her escape from ruin and misery. The squire consoled himself with the reflection that her fortune was his, since the contracts had been signed. At this point Jenkinson proved that the marriage with Olivia Primrose was not a mock marriage, but genuine. She was not dead, but, to the old vicar's surprise and delight, presently walked into the room. The squire's contract was illegal, as he was already married.

54. Squire Thornhill's discomfiture was now complete. He fell on his knees and asked his uncle's forgiveness. Sir William agreed to allow him "a bare competence," and settled one-third of the fortune which once was his on his wife, Olivia. George married Miss Wilmot, and Sir William married Sophia. The vicar learned that a considerable part of his fortune, which he believed had been wholly lost, had been saved. Thus the vicar, like Job, recovered honour and prosperity, and ended his days in comfort.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

1. Any one who visited Uttoxeter, near Lichfield,[1] on a market-day about the beginning of last century, might have noticed in the market-place a little stall, on which books were laid out, to tempt the Staffordshire farmers and their wives. The little book-stall was kept by a poor man named Johnson—the father of the famous Doctor Samuel Johnson, critic, poet, novelist, and dictionary-maker.

2. Samuel Johnson was born at Lichfield on the 18th of September 1709. From infancy the child struggled with disease, which gave him weak eyes and left deep scams on his face. The father gave the poor boy a good education—all he had to give him; and on this foundation the work of a great and noble life began to rise.

3. Having received his elementary education chiefly at Stourbridge,[2] Johnson entered Pembroke College, Oxford; but the dying father had given his son all the money he could spare. Supplies ran short before his course was finished, and the lad had to leave college without a degree.

4. Fits of morbid melancholy—a terrible foe, which he said, "kept him mad half his life"—had already begun to lay hold of him. Penniless, diseased, ill-favoured, only half-educated, and tainted with insanity,

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1 **Lichfield**, in Staffordshire; north of Birmingham.

2 **Stourbridge**, on the river Stour, in Worcestershire.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

the youth of twenty-two stood on the threshold of the mean house within which his father lay dead, looking out upon a world that seemed to him all cold, and bare, and unfriendly.

5. Having trudged to Market-Bosworth in Leicestershire, he there became usher in a school. But the work did not suit him; rather, he was by natural temperament quite unsuited for the work. We then find him translating for a bookseller in Birmingham; and after a while marrying a Mrs. Porter, the widow of a mercer there, who brought him £800. With this money he tried to set up a school of his own near Lichfield. But he failed to get pupils; so he packed up his clothes and his books, and set out for London in March 1736.

6. He was accompanied by a former pupil—fresh-

coloured, good-humoured little Davy Garrick,[1] who became the greatest actor of his day. Garrick was going up to study law in Lincoln's Inn; but already the foot-lights were shining in his brain more brightly than briefs or pleadings at the bar. Pupil and master went to London together; but there they parted, to meet again occasionally, but each to go his own way.

7. Johnson's path was a hard and perilous one. He had to endure the worst miseries of the miserable literary life of those days. For six-and-twenty years the pen scarcely ever left his hand. Often he was put to the greatest straits for shelter and for food.

8. Cave the bookseller was the man for whom he chiefly drudged, enriching the *Gentleman's Magazine* with articles of various kinds. His poem *London*, a satire, laid the foundation of his literary fame by winning for him the favour of the booksellers. For that work Dodsley gave him ten guineas. A *Life of Savage* was followed by a second satire, *The Vanity of Human Wishes;* but these are only the most notable works in a vast crowd of minor writings. His tragedy of *Irene* was put on the stage in 1749; but it proved a failure.

9. Johnson's name is inseparably associated with the *Rambler*, a periodical of the *Spectator* class which appeared twice a week from March 1750 till March 1752. He reappeared as an essayist after the lapse of six years in a lighter periodical called the *Idler*, which ran to one hundred and three numbers.

10. During these years, Johnson had been steadily at work on his *Dictionary of the English Language*. There was then no such work in English literature, and when Johnson undertook to finish it in three years, he had but a slight notion of the toil that lay before him.

1 Garrick, David, famous actor and play-writer (1716–1779).

It actually occupied him for seven years, and was published in 1755.

11. For the finished work he received £1,575—not a large sum, considering the time it occupied, and the fact that he had to pay assistants who relieved him of the drudgery of copying out quotations. The dictionary was a great work for its time, but it was necessarily imperfect, especially in etymology; for of the Teutonic tongues, which form three-fifths of English, Johnson knew nothing.

12. When Johnson's mother died (in 1759), he devoted the nights of a single week to the composition of a book which paid the expenses of her funeral. This was *Rasselas*, a tale of Abyssinia, in which much solid morality is inculcated in language of "a long resounding march;" but the author makes no attempt to identify himself with Oriental modes of thought. It is Samuel Johnson that talks to us in every character throughout the book.

13. The turning-point in Johnson's life was reached on that May-day in 1762 when he received the happy news that the King had conferred on him a pension of £300 a year. Thenceforth he wrote less, but he talked continually. At his weekly Literary Club he met Burke, Garrick, Gibbon, Reynolds, Goldsmith, and many others of the first men in London. He never was so happy as when sitting in his great arm-chair in the midst of a coterie of friends and laying down the law on literary and social questions in his own dogmatic way, and in his own ponderous language.

14. To one of the friends admitted to his confidence the world owes much. That was James Boswell,[1] an

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1 **Boswell,** James, son of Alexander Boswell of Auchinleck, a judge of the Court of Session, the highest Law Court in Scotland. (1740–1795.) His *Life of Johnson* is considered the best biography in the English language, on account of the faithfulness with which he recorded the sayings and doings of its subject.

Edinburgh advocate, who became filled with extraordinary admiration for Johnson, and who made it the purpose of his life to preserve every word that fell from his lips. In spite of sneers and insults hurled by day and by night at his empty head, Boswell persevered with his task. Nearly every night he wrote out when he went home as much as he could remember of the evening's talk. These notes grew ultimately into his great *Life of Johnson*—still held to be the best biography in the English language.

15. The degree of LL.D. conferred on Johnson by the University of Dublin in 1765, was confirmed some years later by Oxford, his own university. In 1765, he published his *Edition of Shakespeare*, the preface to which is one of the best specimens of his prose. In 1773 he travelled in the western islands of Scotland, in company with Boswell; and from his letters to Mrs. Thrale on the subject, he constructed his *Journey to the Western Isles*.

16. The *Lives of the Poets*, finished in 1781, formed the last of his important works. Beginning with Cowley, he writes of the leading poets down to his own day. But the book is a very unsafe guide. In Johnson's view the writing of poetry consisted in the making of high-sounding verses and smooth rhymes.

17. In his last years, Johnson lived chiefly with his friends the Thrales—a rich brewer and his wife—at Streatham.[1] But the end was creeping on. One friend after another dropped into the grave. After two years of complicated disorders—paralysis, dropsy, asthma, and the old melancholy—he joined the company of the illustrious dead that sleep under the stones of Westminster Abbey. On Monday, December 13th, 1784, his last breath was drawn, in his own house in London.

1 **Streatham**, a suburban village south-west of London.

SUMMARY OF JOHNSON'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year.	Age.	
1709		Born at Lichfield, September 18—Educated at Stourbridge.
1728	19	Entered Pembroke College, Oxford.
1731	22	Death of his father—Leaves Oxford without a degree.
1732	23	Usher in school at Market-Bosworth—Leaves the school—Begins literary work.
1735	26	Marries Mrs. Porter, a widow—Private school at Lichfield; a failure.
1736	27	Goes to London with David Garrick—Writes for Cave's "Gentleman's Magazine."
1738	29	Publishes *London*, a poem.
1744	35	Publishes a *Life of Savage.*
1749	40	Publishes *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, a poem—*Irene*, a tragedy, acted.
1750	41	*The Rambler* commenced (till 1752).
1752	43	Death of Mrs. Johnson.
1755	46	Published his *English Dictionary*—Oxford made him M.A.
1758	49	The *Idler* begun.
1759	50	Death of his mother—*Rasselas* published.
1762	53	Pension of £300 a year from the King—The Literary Club instituted.
1763	54	Becomes acquainted with James Boswell.
1765	56	LL.D. Dublin—Edition of *Shakespeare* published.
1773	64	Tour in the Hebrides.
1774	65	*Journey to the Western Isles* published.
1775	66	Visits Paris.
1781	72	*Lives of the Poets* completed.
1784	75	Dies, December 13th.

SELECTIONS FROM JOHNSON.

THE PALACE OF RASSELAS.

[Rasselas is a story, but it has few of the features of a story about it. There is little action and little variety of character. There are no scenes or incidents to excite the interest or to stir the feelings of the reader. The story consists of descriptions, from the moralist's point of view, of different conditions of life. The dialogue is made up of conversations on moral and social questions. The scene of the story is laid in Abyssinia, but the manners and the characters are really those of the England of Johnson's own day.]

1. Ye who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow; attend to the history of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.

2. Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor in whose dominions the Father of Waters[1] begins his course; whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.

3. According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

4. The place which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abyssinian princes was a spacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara,[2] surrounded on every side by mountains, of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage by which it could be entered was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has long been disputed

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1 **The Father of Waters**, the Nile. The Bahr el Azrek, or Blue Nile, which rises in Lake Dembea, was supposed in Johnson's time to be the main branch of the Nile. It is now quite subordinate to the Bahr el Abiad, or White Nile, which rises in the great Equatorial lakes, Albert and Victoria Nyanza.

2 **Amhara**, in the west and the middle of Abyssinia.

whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy that no man could without the help of engines open or shut them.

5. From the mountains on every side rivulets descended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom Nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

6. The sides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass, or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns; the sprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together, the blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

7. The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessaries of life; and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music; and during eight days every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might contribute[1] to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and lessen the

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1 **Whatever might contribute, etc.** | example of Johnson's heavy and verbose
Note the close of this sentence as a striking | **style.**

tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity: the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers showed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity, to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight which this retirement afforded, that they to whom it was new always desired that it might be perpetual; and as those on whom the iron gate had once closed were never suffered to return, the effect of long experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight and new competitors for imprisonment.

8. The palace stood on an eminence raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time; and the building stood from century to century, deriding the solstitial rains[1] and equinoctial hurricanes,[2] without need of reparation.

9. This house, which was so large as to be fully known to none but some ancient officers who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built as if Suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage;[3] every square had a communication with the rest, either from the upper stories by private galleries, or by subterranean passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had re-

1 **Solstitial rains,** rains which in torrid climates attend the solstices—the points in the Sun's apparent path round the Earth which are farthest from the Equator.

2 **Equinoctial hurricanes,** storms of wind which are supposed by many to occur at the time of the equinoxes—the points at which the Sun's apparent path round the Earth crosses the Equator. Then day and night are equal all over the world.

3 **There was an open and secret passage.** Should be, "There *were* an open and *a* secret passage;" or, "There were two passages—the one open, the other secret." When two adjectives imply two objects, the article must be used with each adjective.

posited[1] their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom; and recorded their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower, not entered but by the emperor, attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

LETTER TO LORD CHESTERFIELD.

[The Earl of Chesterfield (Philip Dormer Stanhope) was a leading politician of the reign of George II. He opposed Sir Robert Walpole for many years both in the press and in Parliament. He was a clever and polished writer. He is best known by his *Letters to his Son*, published after his death. At first he treated Johnson with neglect; but when he found that Johnson was becoming famous, he assumed the part of his patron by writing papers in *The World* praising his *English Dictionary*. These papers provoked the following letter, which was prefixed to the first edition of the Dictionary. Chesterfield died in 1773.]

1. My Lord,—I have been lately informed by the proprietor of *The World*[2] that two papers, in which my *Dictionary* is recommended to the public, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

2. When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*[3]—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in public,

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1 **Reposited.** This verb has now gone out of use, and *deposited* has taken its place. The noun *repository* is still used.

2 **The World,** a series of periodical essays similar to Johnson's *Rambler* and *Idler*, and edited by Edward Moore (1712–1757), a poet and play-writer. Lord Chesterfield wrote twenty-four of the essays.

3 **Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre,** "the conqueror of the conqueror of the world."

I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.[1]

3. Seven years, my lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.[2]

4. The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

5. Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which[3] you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity[4] not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

6. Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less;[5] for I

1 **Be it ever so little**, equivalent to "though it be ever so little."

2 **For I never had a patron before.** A good example of *irony*. He means to say that if he had had a patron before, he would have been accustomed to that kind of treatment.

3 **The notice which**, etc. Construe thus: "The notice (which you have been pleased to take of my labours) would have been kind, if it had been early." This sentence is a fine example of Johnson's style of balanced clauses, thus: "Am indifferent....cannot enjoy;" "am solitary....cannot impart;" "am known....do not want."

4 **Cynical asperity**, surly harshness. An instance of Johnson's fondness for learned words.

5 **With less**, with less obligation.

have long been wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself, with so much exultation, my lord, your lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

IONA.

[This short passage, from the *Journey to the Western Isles*, is one of the most famous in all Johnson's writings. Every sentence has some characteristic feature, either in the expression or in the turn of thought.]

We were now treading that illustrious island[1] which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion[2] would be impossible, if it were endeavoured,[3] and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us, indifferent and unmoved,[4] over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism[5] would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.

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1 **That illustrious island,** Iona, on the west of Mull, the scene of the labours of St. Columba and his monks in the sixth century.

2 **Local emotion,** the emotion aroused by a locality and its associations.

3 **Endeavoured.** Better, attempted, or tried. *Endeavour* is an intransitive verb. Notice the balanced period:—"Would be impossible....if it were tried;" "would be foolish....if it were possible."

4 **Indifferent and unmoved,** without arresting our attention and stirring our feelings.

5 **Whose patriotism.** Another example of the balanced period:—"Patriotism.... piety;" "gain force....grow warmer;" "plain of Marathon....ruins of Iona."

CHARLES XII. OF SWEDEN.

[This passage is taken from a satirical poem (in the manner of Juvenal, the Roman satirist), entitled "The Vanity of Human Wishes." The poem might have been a sermon in verse on the text, "He gave them their request (human wishes), but sent leanness (vanity) into their souls." The poet illustrates the theme by examples from modern history. He takes Cardinal Wolsey as the representative of the ambitious statesman. The folly of the conqueror is shown in the career of Charles XII. of Sweden, "the Madman of the North." Born in 1682, he became king in 1697, and immediately entered on a wild career of conquest, his chief opponent being Peter the Great of Russia. Charles was decisively defeated at Pultowa in 1709, took refuge in Turkey for five years, returned to Sweden, attempted to conquer Norway, and was killed at Frederickstein in 1718.]

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes,[1] let Swedish Charles decide:
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,—
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field:
Behold surrounding kings their powers combine,
And one capitulate,[2] and one resign:[3]
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
"Think nothing gained," he cries, "till naught remain,
On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky."
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast,
And Winter barricades the realms of Frost:
He comes; nor want nor cold his course delay;—
Hide, blushing Glory, hide Pultowa's day:[4]

1 **How just his hopes.** Said in irony.
2 **One capitulate.** Frederick IV. of Denmark, in 1700.
3 **One resign.** Frederick Augustus I. of Poland, in 1701. Denmark and Poland had joined Russia in a league for the division of Sweden. The verbs "capitulate" and "resign" are infinitives governed by "behold."
4 **Pultowa's day,** June 15, 1709.

The vanquished hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;[1]
Condemned a needy supplicant to wait,
While ladies interpose and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?—
His fall was destined to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand.[2]
He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale.[3]

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1 **In distant lands**, chiefly in Turkey in Europe.

2 **A barren strand, a petty fortress, and a dubious hand.** He was killed by a cannon-ball shot at random while he was besieging the little castle of Frederickstein, near Frederickshall, near the frontier of Norway and Sweden, a few miles inland from Christiania Fiord (1718).

3 **He left the name, etc.** These two lines are frequently quoted; the last has become a kind of proverb.

EDWARD GIBBON.

1. "As I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol,[1] while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind." In these words, Edward Gibbon describes the circumstances in which he resolved, in his twenty-seventh year, to write his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*—one of the noblest historical works in the English language.

2. Edward Gibbon was born in 1737 at Putney, in Surrey. Being a delicate boy, he received much of his early education from an aunt. When he went to Westminster School at the age of twelve, ill health prevented him from giving very close attention to his studies. From Westminster he passed in 1752 to Oxford, where he arrived, he tells us, "with a stock of erudition that might have puzzled a doctor, and a degree of ignorance of which a school-boy would have been ashamed." The meaning of that is, that while too ill for regular study during his school-days, he had been devouring books for his amusement, especially books of history and travel, in which he took the greatest delight.

3. At Oxford, Gibbon spent fourteen months, leading for the most part a wild and idle life. One result of his private readings was that he joined the Roman Catholic

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1 **Capitol,** the citadel or fortress of Rome.

EDWARD GIBBON.

Church: and with that change his university career came to a close.

4. In the hope of recovering the strayed sheep, his father placed him in the house of a Protestant clergyman at Lausanne in Switzerland. At the end of a year, he returned to the Protestant faith, and declared his belief in the commonly accepted truths of Christianity. But there is too much reason to believe that the change was a matter of form merely, and that Gibbon had read himself into infidelity.

5. The five years Gibbon spent at Lausanne made him a perfect master of French, and considerably advanced his neglected Latin studies. On his return to England, he acted for some time as a captain in the Hampshire Militia, and gained thereby considerable insight into modern military tactics.

6. His father died in 1770, leaving him an estate much encumbered with debt. He then settled in London, and began to write his great book. At the outset he had to contend with an overpowering sense of the magnitude and the difficulty of his task. He could not please himself with his style. Three times he composed the first chapter, and twice he wrote the second and the third, before he felt satisfied with them. By-and-by, however, his gorgeous and stately style grew so familiar to his pen that he made no second copy of what he wrote, but sent the first manuscript direct to the printer. What seemed at first a chaos of tangled facts mixed in hopeless confusion, grew under his shaping hand into an orderly and smoothly-flowing narrative.

7. Gibbon tried for a time to combine political life with his literary labours. In 1774 he entered Parliament as Member for Liskeard, in Cornwall; and he sat for that place, and for Lymington in Hampshire, during eight sessions. But he made no figure in the House of Commons. The great speakers, he said, filled him with despair, and the poor ones with dread. He supported, however, Lord North's Ministry in its American policy, and was rewarded by being appointed a commissioner of trade and the plantations—that is, the colonies.

8. In 1776, when he had been already two years in Parliament as Member for Liskeard, the first volume of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was published, and the author sprang at once into literary fame. Five years afterwards the second and third volumes made their appearance. Disappointed in his hopes of a permanent government post, Gibbon retired in 1783 to the house of a literary friend at Lausanne, where he wrote the rest of the work.

9. Gibbon's life at Lausanne was at once simple and

studious. His literary work was confined to four hours between breakfast and luncheon. He spent the rest of the day in light reading, in playing chess or whist, and in the society of friends. The last volume was given to the world in 1788. He has himself recorded his feelings on completing his work.

10. "It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk, of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and perhaps the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion; and that, whatsoever might be the future date of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious."

11. After seeing the last volumes through the press in London, Gibbon returned to Lausanne, and did not leave it till 1793, when the death of Lady Sheffield[1] brought him in haste to London, to console her bereaved husband, who was his most intimate friend. In little more than six months after he had left his Swiss retreat, he died in London of a disease that had long been preying on his strength (January 16, 1794).

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1 **Lady Sheffield.** Her husband was John Baker Holroyd, Lord Sheffield, born about 1741. He was a soldier and a politician, and wrote pamphlets on the *Orders in Council* (1809), and on commercial questions. He died in 1821.

SUMMARY OF GIBBON'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year.	Age.	
1737		Born at Putney.
1749	12	Goes to Westminster School.
1752	15	Goes to Magdalen College, Oxford.
1753	16	Turns Roman Catholic, and leaves Oxford.
1754	17	Goes to Lausanne—Returns to the Protestant Church.
1759	22	Publishes *Essai sur l'Etude de la Littérature.*
1761	24	Acts as captain in the Hampshire Militia.
1763	26	Visits Italy, and resolves to write of the fall of Rome.
1770	33	Death of his father—Settles in London.
1774	37	Enters Parliament as Member for Liskeard.
1776	39	Publishes first volume of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*
1781	44	Publishes vols. 2 and 3.
1783	46	Retires from Parliament, and returns to Lausanne.
1787	50	Finishes the History, June 27.
1788	51	Publishes vols. 4, 5, and 6, concluding the History.
1793	56	Returns to London.
1794	57	Dies in London, January 16.

SELECTION FROM GIBBON.

THE TAKING OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

[The following extract is from the thirty-eighth chapter of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Besides being a fine example of Gibbon's graphic power and stately style, it is interesting as the climax of the history. With the Fall of Constantinople, the last remnant of the Roman Empire of the East disappeared; and it had survived the fall of the Western Empire by nearly one thousand years. With that event, also, Medieval history closes, and the Modern history of Europe begins. The scattering of scholars and of manuscripts which followed led to the revival of learning, and that was one of the causes of the Reformation.

Mahomet II., who directed the siege, succeeded his father Amurath II. in 1451. He spent upwards of a year in his preparations, and in the spring of 1453 he led an army of 70,000 Turks to the walls of Constantinople. His lines stretched across the western side of the triangle on which the city stands. The emperor was Constantine Palæologus, who had ascended the throne in 1448. Out of a population of 100,000, he could induce no more than 5,000 to arm in defence of the capital. Besides these, he had 2,000 mercenaries, under Justiniani, a noble Genoese, who was the real leader of the defence. A strong chain guarded the entrance to the Golden Horn, but outside of it there was a Turkish fleet of 320 ships. The besieged were at first successful. The assault of the Turks was repulsed and their engines were destroyed. Five Greek ships laden with food and fresh troops passed through the Turkish fleet and got into the harbour of the city.]

1. The reduction of the city appeared to be hopeless, unless a double attack could be made—from the harbour as well as from the land; but the harbour was inaccessible: an impenetrable chain was now defended by eight large ships, more than twenty of a smaller size, with several galleys and sloops; and instead of forcing this barrier, the Turks might apprehend a naval sally, and a second encounter[1] in the open sea.

2. In this perplexity the genius of Mahomet conceived and executed a plan of a bold and marvellous cast, of transporting by land his lighter vessels and military stores from the Bosporus into the higher part of the harbour. The distance is about ten

1 **A second encounter.** The first encounter was that with the five Greek ships referred to in the head-note.

miles, the ground is uneven, and was overspread with thickets; and as the road must be opened behind the suburb of Galata, their free passage or total destruction must depend on the option of the Genoese.[1] But these selfish merchants were ambitious of the favour of being the last devoured, and the deficiency of art was supplied by the strength of obedient myriads.[2]

3. A level way was covered with a broad platform of strong and solid planks, and to render them more slippery and smooth they were anointed with the fat of sheep and oxen. Fourscore light galleys and brigantines of fifty and thirty oars were disembarked on the Bosporus shore, arranged successively on rollers, and drawn forwards by the power of men and pulleys. Two guides or pilots were stationed at the helm and the prow[3] of each vessel, the sails were unfurled to the winds, and the labour was cheered by song and acclamation.

4. In the course of a single night, this Turkish fleet painfully climbed the hill, steered over the plain, and was launched from the declivity into the shallower waters of the harbour, far above the molestation of the deeper vessels of the Greeks. The real importance of this operation was magnified by the consternation and confidence which it inspired;[4] but the notorious, unquestionable fact was displayed before the eyes, and is recorded by the pens of the two nations. A similar stratagem had been repeatedly practised by the ancients: the Ottoman galleys (I must again repeat) should be considered as large boats; and if we compare the magnitude and the distance, the obstacles and the means, the boasted miracle has perhaps been equalled[5] by the industry of our own times.

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1 **The Genoese,** Italian merchants who occupied the suburb of Galata, on the north side of the Golden Horn. Galata is still the chief seat of the trade of Constantinople, and is chiefly occupied by European Christians.

2 **Obedient myriads,** the vast number of Turkish soldiers.

3 **Two guides or pilots were stationed at the helm and the prow.** It is not clear whether one guide was placed at the helm and another at the prow of each vessel, or two in each position.

4 **The consternation and confidence which it inspired.** Consternation on the side of the Greeks, confidence on that of the Turks.

5 **Perhaps been equalled.** Frequently by the Norsemen. They dragged their galleys over the neck of land between Loch Long and Loch Lomond, in Scotland.

5. As soon as Mahomet had occupied the upper harbour with a fleet and army, he constructed in the narrowest part a bridge, or rather mole, of fifty cubits in breadth and one hundred in length; it was formed of casks and hogsheads, joined with rafters linked with iron, and covered with a solid floor. On this floating battery he planted one of his largest cannon; while the fourscore galleys, with troops and scaling-ladders, approached the most accessible side, which had formerly been stormed by the Latin conquerors.

6. The indolence of the Christians has been accused[1] for not destroying these unfinished works; but their fire, by a superior fire, was controlled and silenced; nor were they wanting in a nocturnal attempt to burn the vessels as well as the bridge of the sultan. His vigilance prevented their approach; their foremost galliots[2] were sunk or taken; forty youths, the bravest of Italy and Greece, were inhumanly massacred at his command; nor could the emperor's grief be assuaged by the just though cruel retaliation of exposing from the walls the heads of two hundred and sixty Mussulman captives.

7. After a siege of forty days, the fate of Constantinople could no longer be averted. The diminutive garrison was exhausted by a double attack; the fortifications, which had stood for ages against hostile violence, were dismantled on all sides by the Ottoman cannon: many breaches were opened, and near the gate of St. Romanus four towers had been levelled with the ground. For the payment of his feeble and mutinous troops, Constantine was compelled to despoil the churches, with the promise of a fourfold restitution; and his sacrilege offered a new reproach to the enemies of the union. A spirit of discord impaired the remnant of the Christian strength: the Genoese and Venetian auxiliaries asserted the pre-eminence of their respective service, and Justiniani and the great duke,[3]

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1 **Indolence....has been accused.** A classical expression. The modern idiom would be, "The Christians have been charged with indolence." The whole of paragraph 6 reads like a translation from the Latin.

2 **Galliots,** small galleys.

3 **The great duke,** the leader of the Venetian mercenaries.

whose ambition was not extinguished by the common danger, accused each other of treachery and cowardice.

8. At daybreak (A.D. 1453, May 29), without the customary signal of the morning gun, the Turks assaulted the city by sea and land; and the similitude of a twined or twisted thread has been applied to the closeness and continuity of their line of attack. The foremost ranks consisted of the refuse of the host, a voluntary crowd who fought without order or command; of the feebleness of age or childhood, of peasants and vagrants, and of all who had joined the camp in the blind hope of plunder and martyrdom.

9. The common impulse drove them onwards to the wall. The most audacious to climb were instantly precipitated; and not a dart, not a bullet, of the Christians was idly wasted on the accumulated throng. But their strength and ammunition were exhausted in this laborious defence: the ditch was filled with the bodies of the slain, they supported the footsteps of their companions, and of this devoted vanguard the death was more serviceable than the life.[1] Under their respective bashaws[2] and sanjaks[3] the troops of Anatolia[4] and Romania[5] were successively led to the charge: their progress was various and doubtful, but after a conflict of two hours the Greeks still maintained and improved their advantage; and the voice of the emperor was heard encouraging his soldiers to achieve by a last effort the deliverance of their country.

10. In that fatal moment the Janissaries[6] arose, fresh, vigorous, and invincible. The sultan himself on horseback, with an iron mace in his hand, was the spectator and judge of their valour. He was surrounded by ten thousand of his domestic

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1 **The death was more serviceable than the life.** In two ways—first, they exhausted the ammunition of the besieged; secondly, their bodies filled up the trenches, and thus enabled their abler companions to reach the wall.

2 **Bashaws,** pashas; governors or commanders.

3 **Sanjaks,** or *sangiacs,* rulers of provinces in Turkey.

4 **Anatolia,** the western part of Turkey in Asia.

5 **Roumania,** provinces north of the Danube near its mouth.

6 **Janissaries,** Turkish foot-soldiers of the best class. They were originally the children of Christians trained for the army from their youth.

troops, whom he reserved for the decisive occasions; and the tide of battle was directed and impelled by his voice and eye. His numerous ministers of justice were posted behind the line, to urge, to restrain, and to punish; and if danger was in the front, shame and inevitable death were in the rear of the fugitives.[1]

11. The cries of fear and of pain were drowned in the martial music of drums, trumpets, and ataballs;[2] and experience has proved that the mechanical operation of sounds, by quickening the circulation of the blood and spirits, will act on the human machine more forcibly than the eloquence of reason and honour. From the lines, the galleys, and the bridge the Ottoman artillery thundered on all sides, and the camp and city, the Greeks and the Turks, were involved in a cloud of smoke, which could only be dispelled by the final deliverance or destruction of the Roman Empire.

12. The single combats of the heroes of history or fable amuse our fancy and engage our affections; the skilful evolutions of war may inform the mind, and improve a necessary though pernicious science. But in the uniform and odious pictures of a general assault all is blood, and horror, and confusion; nor shall I strive, at the distance of three centuries and a thousand miles, to delineate a scene of which there could be no spectators, and of which the actors themselves were incapable of forming any just or adequate idea.

13. The immediate loss of Constantinople may be ascribed to the bullet, or arrow,[3] which pierced the gauntlet of John Justiniani. The sight of his blood and the exquisite pain appalled the courage of the chief, whose arms and counsels were the firmest rampart of the city. As he withdrew from his station in quest of a surgeon, his flight was perceived and stopped by the indefatigable emperor.

14. "Your wound," exclaimed Palæologus, "is slight, the

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1 **Of the fugitives,** of those who might become fugitives.

2 **Ataballs,** kettledrums.

3 **The bullet or arrow,** "the bullet or *the* arrow." In "the bullet or arrow" there are two names for one thing; in "the bullet or the arrow," there are two things.

danger is pressing, your presence is necessary, and whither will you retire?"

"I will retire," said the trembling Genoese, "by the same road which God has opened to the Turks;" and at these last words he hastily passed through one of the breaches of the inner wall.

15. By this pusillanimous act he stained the honours of a military life, and the few days which he survived in Galata, or the isle of Chios,[1] were embittered by his own and the public reproach. His example was imitated by the greatest part of the Latin auxiliaries, and the defence began to slacken when the attack was pressed with redoubled vigour. The number of the Ottomans was fifty, perhaps an hundred, times superior to that of the Christians; the double walls were reduced by the cannon to a heap of ruins. In a circuit of several miles some places must be found more easy of access, or more feebly guarded, and if the besiegers could penetrate in a single point, the whole city was irrecoverably lost.

16. The first who deserved the sultan's reward was Hassan, the Janissary, of gigantic stature and strength. With his scimitar in one hand and his buckler in the other, he ascended the outward fortification: of the thirty Janissaries who were emulous of his valour eighteen perished in the bold adventure. Hassan and his twelve companions had reached the summit. The giant was precipitated from the rampart; he rose on one knee, and was again oppressed by a shower of darts and stones. But his success had proved that the achievement was possible: the walls and towers were instantly covered with a swarm of Turks, and the Greeks, now driven from the vantage-ground, were overwhelmed by increasing multitudes.

17. Amidst these multitudes the emperor, who accomplished all the duties of a general and a soldier, was long seen, and finally lost. The nobles who fought round his person sustained till their last breath the honourable names of Palæologus and

1 **Chios**, an island off the west coast of Asia Minor; now Scio.

Cantacuzene.[1] His mournful exclamation was heard, "Cannot there be found a Christian to cut off my head?" and his last fear was that of falling alive into the hands of the infidels. The prudent despair of Constantine cast away the purple. Amidst the tumult he fell by an unknown hand, and his body was buried under a mountain of the slain.

18. After his death, resistance and order were no more. The Greeks fled toward the city, and many were pressed and stifled in the narrow pass of the gate of St. Romanus. The victorious Turks rushed through the breaches of the inner wall, and as they advanced into the streets they were soon joined by their brethren who had forced the gate Phenar on the side of the harbour.

19. In the first heat of the pursuit about two thousand Christians were put to the sword; but avarice soon prevailed over cruelty, and the victors acknowledged that they should immediately have given quarter, if the valour of the emperor and his chosen bands had not prepared them for a similar opposition in every part of the capital. It was thus, after a siege of fifty-three days, that Constantinople was irretrievably subdued by the arms of Mahomet the Second. Her empire only had been subverted by the Latins; her religion was trampled in the dust by the Moslem conquerors.

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1 **Palæologus and Cantacuzene.** The reference is to John Palæologus, emperor from 1391 till 1411, and to John Cantacuzene, who was regent during his minority. The latter took Constantinople, seized the throne, and married Palæologus to his daughter. He was forced to abdicate, and became a monk.

EDMUND BURKE.

1. In the Examination Hall of Trinity College, Dublin, there is a portrait of a statesman whom the college, and indeed whom all Irishmen, hold in high esteem. It is that of Edmund Burke, the greatest of English political writers, and one of the foremost of British orators. He was born in 1730 in Dublin, where his father was an attorney in large practice.

2. In his twelfth year, young Burke was sent to the Academy of the Society of Friends at Ballitore in Kildare, and there he studied under a skilful master for two years. In 1743 he entered Trinity College, Dublin. He remained there four years, taking his B.A. degree in 1747.

3. As it was his ambition to shine at the English bar, he was entered at the Middle Temple immediately after leaving college. But he never became a lawyer. His great genius soon found its fitting sphere in the life of a statesman.

4. In the meantime he began to write his way to fame. History and philosophy chiefly engaged his attention. His first work was *A Vindication of Natural Society*, written in the lofty and eloquent style of Lord Bolingbroke.[1] That was followed in the same year (1756) by his well-known *Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful.*

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1 **Bolingbroke,** Henry St. John, Viscount, a statesman of the times of Anne and Georges I. and II.; a friend of the poet Pope. He published *Idea of a Patriot King*, and *Letters on History.* (1678-1751.)

EDMUND BURKE.

5. On the strength of his prospects as a literary man, and of an allowance of £200 a year made to him by his father, Burke in 1757 married Miss Nugent, a daughter of Dr. Christopher Nugent of Bath. He then entered into new literary engagements with Dodsley the bookseller. For a sketch of *American History*, in two volumes, he received fifty guineas. He projected the *Annual Register* in 1758, and for several years he wrote the whole of it for £100 a volume. While thus writing for his daily bread, and struggling with difficulties, Burke never let go the hope of fame.

6. His entrance on political life dates from his appointment in 1761 as private secretary to Mr. William Gerard Hamilton, known as "Single-Speech Hamilton," who then became Chief Secretary for Ireland. This position, which he occupied for upwards of two years,

gave Burke an opportunity of showing his aptitude for political business; and in 1763 he received for his services a pension of £300 a year on the Irish establishment. But the atmosphere of Dublin Castle did not suit the clever young Whig. He broke with Hamilton, threw up his pension, and returned to London in 1764.

7. Having become private secretary to the Marquis of Rockingham, who became Prime Minister in 1765, Burke in the following year entered the House of Commons as Member for Wendover.[1] He was then thirty-six years of age.

8. Among the great men who then sat on the benches of the ancient hall of St. Stephen's, Burke at once took a foremost place. During the next eight-and-twenty years he was an ornament of the House. In the stirring years of the American War he poured out the riches of a well-stored mind in many noble orations.

9. The crown of his glory as an orator was won in Westminster Hall, where he led the impeachment of Warren Hastings,[2] Governor-General of India, on the charge of having extorted money from native princes. As mover of the impeachment in the House of Commons, he opened the case in February 1788, in a speech of four days. He continued his statement for several days in April; and he wound up his charges with an address, which began on the 28th of May and lasted for nine days thereafter.

10. As he spoke, the scenery of the East unfolded itself in brilliant pictures before the fancy of his audience; and when the sufferings of tortured Hindus and the desolation of wasted fields were painted, the

1 **Wendover**, in Buckinghamshire.

2 **Warren Hastings**, first Governor-General of India (1773). His trial lasted seven years, and ended in his acquittal (1795). He died in 1818.

effect of the contrast was electrical. Women sobbed and screamed, and some were "carried out in fits."

11. Other questions on which he expended his eloquence and his judgment were Catholic emancipation, the abolition of the slave trade, and economical reform. In 1782 he was appointed Paymaster of the Forces and a Privy Councillor.

12. The subject that filled his thoughts during his last years was the great French Revolution. He had foreseen the storm that was gathering over France; and when it broke in fury, he wrote his greatest work—*Reflections on the Revolution in France.* In that work he warned England against cherishing at home the ideas which were bearing such terrible fruit on the other side of the Channel (1790). This work at once achieved immense popularity. It was sold in tens of thousands. No political essay ever produced so extraordinary an effect.

13. The following year witnessed Burke's famous quarrel with Fox[1] in the House of Commons. Fox supported the bill of the government for the division of Canada into two provinces, Upper and Lower. Burke denounced the bill in a violent speech against republican principles, and declared that he would hold no intercourse with those who defended them. Fox, who had been his life-long friend, whispered, "There is no loss of friendship, I hope?"—"Yes," replied Burke; "there is loss of friendship. I know the price of my conduct: our friendship is at an end."

14. Burke sometimes stole away from his public duties to his gardens at Gregories, near Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire, where in 1768 he had purchased an

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1 Fox, Charles James, great statesman and orator; third son of Lord Holland. (1749–1806) He was the noted rival and opponent of William Pitt the younger.

estate for £20,000. In 1794 he retired from Parliament and from public life; and soon afterwards a heavy blow fell on his gray head. His only son—his only child—Richard, who had been for thirty-six years the light of his eyes, sank under rapid consumption, and died in his father's arms. The son was a singularly gifted man, and his father had looked forward to his filling the place which he was vacating. His death made the world all darkness to Edmund Burke.

15. He spent his last years in congenial literary work at Beaconsfield. His *Letter to a Noble Lord* was called forth by the objections of certain peers to the pension that had been conferred on him. It stands next to the *French Revolution* as a specimen of his powerful and trenchant style. His last work—*Letters on a Regicide Peace*—shows that he retained all his powers unimpaired till the end of his life.

16. When his health began to fail, he had recourse to the waters of Bath, where he spent four months. But it was of no avail; he sank daily, his heart still bleeding for his lost son. He returned home to die. The end came on July 7th, 1797. He was buried beside his son, in a vault beneath Beaconsfield Church.

SUMMARY OF BURKE'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year. Age.

1730.....Born in Dublin.

1741...11...Goes to school at Ballitore, Kildare.

1743...13...Goes to Trinity College, Dublin.

1747...17...Enters his name at the Middle Temple, London.

1750...20...Goes to London, and begins to write.

1756...26...Publishes *A Vindication of Natural Society*—and Essay on *The Sublime and Beautiful.*

1757...27...Marries Miss Nugent of Bath—Publishes sketch of *American History.*

Year. Age.

1758...28...Begins the *Annual Register*, and for some years writes the whole of it.

1761...31...Private secretary to the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Hamilton).

1765...35...Becomes private secretary to Lord Rockingham, the Prime Minister.

1766...36...M.P. for Wendover.

1768...38...Purchases Beaconsfield.

1774...44...M.P. for Bristol.

1780...50...M.P. for Malton.

1782.. 52...Appointed Paymaster of the Forces and Privy Councillor.

1788...58...Speech on the impeachment of Warren Hastings.

1790...60...Publishes *Reflections on the French Revolution—Letter to a Noble Lord—Letters on a Regicide Peace.*

1791...61 ..Quarrel with Fox, on the Canada Act.

1794...64...Death of his only son.

1797...67 ..Dies.

SELECTIONS FROM BURKE.

SPEECH ON CONCILIATION WITH AMERICA.

[The great speech from which the following passages are taken was delivered in the House of Commons in 1775, in support of thirteen resolutions for quieting the American colonies. It will be remembered that the British Government had levied taxes on the colonists, though the colonists were not represented in the British Parliament. The colonists objected, and the home Government resolved to coerce them. Burke, with Lord Chatham, advocated a policy of conciliation, and in support of that policy the following speech was delivered. It is one of the most powerful of Burke's speeches, but it had no effect on the Government. War followed: the colonies separated from England and formed the United States.]

ENTERPRISE OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES.

1. I pass to the colonies in another point of view—their agriculture. This they have prosecuted with such a spirit, that, besides feeding plentifully their own growing multitude, their annual export of grain, comprehending rice, has some years ago exceeded a million in value. Of their last harvest, I am persuaded, they will export much more. At the beginning of the century, some of these colonies imported corn from the mother country. For some time past, the Old World has been fed from the New. The scarcity which you have felt would have been a desolating famine, if this child of your old age, with a true filial piety, with a Roman charity, had not put the full breast of its youthful exuberance to the mouth of its exhausted parent.[1]

2. As to the wealth which the colonies have drawn from the sea by their fisheries, you had all that matter fully opened at your bar.[2] You surely thought those acquisitions of value, for they seemed even to excite your envy; and yet the spirit by which that enterprising employment has been exercised ought

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1 **Its exhausted parent.** An allusion to the story of the Roman mother who, when left to starve in prison, was kept alive by the nourishment derived from her daughter's breast. [Commons.

2 **Your bar,** the bar of the House of

rather, in my opinion, to have raised your esteem and admiration. And pray, sir,[1] what in the world is equal to it? Pass by the other parts, and look at the manner in which the people of New England have of late carried on the whale fishery. Whilst we follow them among the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson Bay and Davis Strait, whilst we are looking for them beneath the Arctic Circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of polar cold, that they are at the antipodes, and engaged under the frozen serpent of the South.[2] Falkland Island,[3] which seemed too remote and romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition, is but a stage and resting-place in the progress of their victorious industry.

3. Nor is the equinoctial heat[4] more discouraging to them than the accumulated winter of both the poles. We know that whilst some of them draw the line and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude,[5] and pursue their gigantic game along the coast of Brazil. No sea but what is vexed[6] by their fisheries; no climate that is not witness to their toils. Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this most perilous mode of hard industry to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people;[7] a people who are still, as it were, but in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood.

4. When I contemplate these things; when I know that the colonies in general owe little or nothing to any care of ours, and that they are not squeezed into this happy form by the constraints of watchful and suspicious government, but that through a wise and salutary neglect a generous Nature has been suffered

1 **Sir.** Burke is addressing the Speaker of the House of Commons.

2 **The frozen serpent of the South,** the constellation Hydra in the southern celestial hemisphere.

3 **Falkland Island,** chief of the Falkland Islands, in the South Atlantic, 300 miles from the coast of South America.

4 **Equinoctial.** Better, equatorial or tropical.

5 **Run the longitude,** sail southward.

6 **Vexed,** agitated: stirred up: the sense of *vexare* in Latin.

7 **Recent people,** people of recent origin.

to take her own way to perfection; when I reflect upon these effects, when I see how profitable they have been to us, I feel all the pride of power sink, and all presumption in the wisdom of human contrivances melt and die away within me. My rigour relents. I pardon something to the spirit of liberty.

5. I am sensible, sir, that all which I have asserted, in my detail, is admitted in the gross; but that quite a different conclusion is drawn from it. America, gentlemen say, is a noble object. It is an object well worth fighting for. Certainly it is, if fighting a people be the best way of gaining them. Gentlemen in this respect will be led to their choice of means by their complexions and their habits. Those who understand the military art, will of course have some predilection for it. Those who wield the thunder of the State,[1] may have more confidence in the efficacy of arms. But I confess, possibly for want of this knowledge, my opinion is much more in favour of prudent management than of force; considering force not as an odious, but a feeble instrument for preserving a people so numerous, so active, so growing, so spirited as this, in a profitable and subordinate connection with us.

OBJECTIONS TO FORCE.

6. First, sir, permit me to observe, that the use of force alone is but *temporary*. It may subdue for a moment, but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again: and a nation is not governed which is perpetually to be conquered.

7. My next objection is its *uncertainty*. Terror is not always the effect of force; and an armament is not a victory. If you do not succeed, you are without resource: for conciliation failing, force remains; but force failing, no further hope of reconciliation is left. Power and authority are sometimes bought by kindness; but they can never be begged as alms by an impoverished and defeated violence.

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1 **Wield the thunder of the State,** direct its armies, and especially its artillery. | Conversely, thunder is sometimes called "the artillery of heaven."

8. A further objection to force is, that you *impair the object* by your very endeavours to preserve it. The thing you fought for is not the thing which you recover; but depreciated, sunk, wasted, and consumed in the contest. Nothing less will content me than *whole America.*[1] I do not choose to consume its strength along with our own, because in all parts it is the British strength that I consume. I do not choose to be caught by a foreign enemy at the end of this exhausting conflict, and still less in the midst of it. I may escape; but I can make no insurance against such an event. Let me add, that I do not choose wholly to break the American spirit, because it is the spirit that has made the country.

9. Lastly, we have no sort of *experience* in favour of force as an instrument in the rule of our colonies. Their growth and their utility have been owing to methods altogether different. Our ancient indulgence has been said to be pursued to a fault. It may be so. But we know, if feeling is evidence, that our fault was more tolerable than our attempt to mend it; and our sin far more salutary than our penitence.

10. These, sir, are my reasons for not entertaining that high opinion of untried force, by which many gentlemen, for whose sentiments in other particulars I have great respect, seem to be so greatly captivated. But there is still, behind, a third consideration concerning this object, which serves to determine my opinion on the sort of policy which ought to be pursued in the management of America, even more than its population and its commerce---I mean its *temper and character.*

TEMPER AND CHARACTER OF THE AMERICANS.

11. In this character of the Americans, a love of freedom is the predominating feature which marks and distinguishes the whole; and as an ardent is always a jealous affection, your colonies become suspicious, restive, and untractable, whenever they see the least attempt to wrest from them by force, or

1 **Whole America,** whole in spirit, not wasted or depreciated.

shuffle from them by chicane,[1] what they think the only advantage worth living for. This fierce spirit of liberty is stronger in the English colonies, probably, than in any other people of the earth; and this from a great variety of powerful causes, which,[2] to understand the true temper of their minds, and the direction which this spirit takes, it will not be amiss to lay open somewhat more largely.

12. First,[3] the people of the colonies are descendants of Englishmen. England, sir, is a nation which still I hope respects, and formerly adored, her freedom. The colonists emigrated from you when this part of your character was most predominant; and they took this bias and direction the moment they parted from your hands. They are therefore not only devoted to liberty, but to liberty according to English ideas and on English principles. Abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found. Liberty inheres in some sensible object; and every nation has formed to itself some favourite point, which by way of eminence becomes the criterion of their happiness.

13. It happened, you know, sir, that the great contests for freedom in this country were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question of taxing. Most of the contests in the ancient commonwealths turned primarily on the right of election of magistrates, or on the balance among the several orders of the State. The question of money was not with them so immediate. But in England it was otherwise. On this point of taxes the ablest pens, and most eloquent tongues, have been exercised; the greatest spirits have acted and suffered.

14. In order to give the fullest satisfaction concerning the importance of this point, it was not only necessary for those who in argument defended the excellence of the English Constitution to insist on this privilege of granting money as a dry

1 **Chicane**, trickery; dodging. The noun is properly "chicanery." Chicane is the verb.

2 **Which.** The object of "to lay open."

3 **First** — that is, first of the causes which made the spirit of liberty so strong in the English colonies.

point of fact, and to prove that the right had been acknowledged in ancient parchments, and blind usages, to reside in a certain body called an House of Commons. They went much further: they attempted to prove, and they succeeded, that in theory it ought to be so, from the particular nature of a House of Commons, as an immediate representative of the people; whether the old records had delivered this oracle or not. They took infinite pains to inculcate, as a fundamental principle, that in all monarchies the people must in effect themselves, mediately or immediately, possess the power of granting their own money, or no shadow of liberty could subsist.

15. The colonies draw from you, as with their life-blood, these ideas and principles. Their love of liberty, as with you, fixed[1] and attached on this pacific point of taxing. Liberty might be safe, or might be endangered in twenty other particulars, without their being much pleased or alarmed. Here they felt its pulse; and as they found that beat, they thought themselves sick or sound. I do not say whether they were right or wrong in applying your general arguments to their own case. The fact is, that they did thus apply those general arguments; and your mode of governing them, whether through lenity or indolence, through wisdom or mistake, confirmed them in the imagination that they, as well as you, had an interest in these common principles.

16. They were further confirmed in this pleasing error by the form of their provincial legislative assemblies. Their governments are popular in an high degree: some are merely popular; in all, the popular representative is the most weighty: and this share of the people in their ordinary government never fails to inspire them with lofty sentiments, and with a strong aversion from whatever tends to deprive them of their chief importance.

17. If anything were wanting to this necessary operation of the form of government, religion would have given it a complete effect. Religion, always a principle of energy, in this new

1 **Fixed**, in the sense of fastened.

people is no way worn out or impaired; and their mode of professing it is also one main cause of this free spirit. The people are Protestants, and of that kind which is the most adverse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion. This is a persuasion not only favourable to liberty, but built upon it. I do not think, sir, that the reason of this averseness in the Dissenting Churches from all that looks like absolute government is so much to be sought in their religious tenets as in their history. Every one knows that the Roman Catholic religion is at least coëval with most of the governments where it prevails; that it has generally gone hand in hand with them, and received great favour and every kind of support from authority. The Church of England, too, was formed from her cradle under the nursing care of regular government.

18. But the Dissenting interests have sprung up in direct opposition to all the ordinary powers of the world, and could justify that opposition only on a strong claim to natural liberty. Their very existence depended on the powerful and unremitted assertion of that claim. All Protestantism, even the most cold and passive, is a sort of Dissent. But the religion most prevalent in our northern colonies is a refinement on the principle of resistance; it is the Dissidence of Dissent,[1] and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion. This religion, under a variety of denominations, agreeing in nothing but in the communion of the spirit of liberty, is predominant in most of the northern provinces; where the Church of England, notwithstanding its legal rights, is in reality no more than a sort of private sect, not composing most probably the tenth of the people. The colonists left England when this spirit was high, and in the emigrants was the highest of all; and even that stream of foreigners, which has been constantly flowing into these colonies, has, for the greatest part, been composed of dissenters from the establishments of their several countries, and they have brought

1 **Dissidence of Dissent,** dissent in its purest form. The phrase resembles the French phrase for the purest essence—*la crême de la crême*, the cream of the cream.

with them a temper and character far from alien to that of the people with whom they mixed.

19. Permit me, sir, to add another circumstance in our colonies, which contributes no mean part towards the growth and effect of this untractable spirit. I mean their education. In no country perhaps in the world is the law so general a study. The profession itself is numerous and powerful; and in most provinces it takes the lead. The greater number of the deputies sent to the Congress[1] were lawyers. But all who read, and most do read, endeavour to obtain some smattering in that science. I have been told by an eminent bookseller that in no branch of his business, after tracts of popular devotion, were so many books as those on the law exported to the plantations.[2]

20. This study renders men acute, inquisitive, dexterous, prompt in attack, ready in defence, full of resources. In other countries, the people, more simple, and of a less mercurial[3] cast, judge of an ill principle in government only by an actual grievance: here they anticipate the evil, and judge of the pressure of the grievance by the badness of the principle. They augur misgovernment at a distance, and snuff the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze.

21. The last cause of this disobedient spirit in the colonies is hardly less powerful than the rest, as it is not merely moral, but laid deep in the natural constitution of things. Three thousand miles of ocean lie between you and them. No contrivance can prevent the effect of this distance in weakening government. Seas roll, and months pass, between the order and the execution; and the want of a speedy explanation of a single point is enough to defeat a whole system. You have, indeed, winged ministers of vengeance, who carry your bolts in

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1 **Congress**, the Parliament of the States, which first met at Philadelphia in 1774.

2 **Plantations**, the name given to estates in land in the southern colonies of North America. In the northern colonies they were called *farms*. To *plant* is the usual word applied to the founding of colonies. The settlement of English and Scottish families in the north of Ireland in the time of James I. is called "the plantation of Ulster."

3 **Mercurial**, mobile; restless; excitable.

their pounces[1] to the remotest verge of the sea. But there a power steps in that limits the arrogance of raging passions and furious elements, and says, "So far shalt thou go, and no farther." Who are you, that should fret and rage, and bite the chains of Nature?

22. Nothing worse happens to you than does to all nations who have extensive empire; and it happens in all the forms into which empire can be thrown. In large bodies, the circulation of power must be less vigorous at the extremities. Nature has said it. The Turk cannot govern Egypt, and Arabia, and Kurdistan,[2] as he governs Thrace;[3] nor has he the same dominion in Crimea and Algiers which he has at Brusa[4] and Smyrna. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster.[5] The Sultan gets such obedience as he can. He governs with a loose rein, that he may govern at all; and the whole of the force and vigour of his authority in his centre is derived from a prudent relaxation in all his borders. Spain, in her provinces, is perhaps not so well obeyed as you are in yours. She complies too; she submits; she watches times. This is the immutable condition, the eternal law, of extensive and detached empire.

23. Then, sir, from these six capital sources[6]—of descent; of form of government; of religion in the northern provinces; of manners in the southern; of education; of the remoteness of situation from the first mover of government;—from all these causes a fierce spirit of liberty has grown up. It has grown with the growth of the people in your colonies, and increased with the increase of their wealth; a spirit, that unhappily meeting with an exercise of power in England, which, however lawful, is not reconcilable to any ideas of liberty, much less with theirs, has kindled this flame, that is ready to consume us.

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1 **Pounces**, claws; talons.

2 **Kurdistan**, in the east of Asia Minor, near Lake Van.

3 **Thrace**, now Roumelia.

4 **Brusa**, in Anatolia, a few miles from the south coast of the Sea of Marmora.

5 **To truck and huckster**, to barter and haggle, or to deal in small-wares.

6 **Six capital sources.** Notice the force and point that are given to the argument by the clear summing up of the six points at the close.

THE QUEEN OF FRANCE.

[On the 6th October 1789, a Parisian mob, consisting largely of women, went to Versailles, whither King Louis XVI. and his queen, Marie Antoinette had fled. The rioters entered the palace and reached the door of the queen's apartment. She fled half-dressed to her husband's room. The palace was filled with tumult, the rioters swarming everywhere. By dint of firmness and bravery, Lafayette cleared the palace and rescued the king and queen; but it was necessary to comply with the demand of the mob that they should return immediately to Paris. The extract is taken from Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution."]

1. I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady,[1] the other object of the triumph, has borne that day (one is interested that beings made for suffering should suffer well), and that she bears all the succeeding days; that she bears the imprisonment of her husband, and her own captivity, and the exile of her friends, and the insulting adulation of addresses, and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a serene patience, in a manner suited to her rank and race, and becoming the offspring of a sovereign[2] distinguished for her piety and her courage;—that, like her, she has lofty sentiments; that she feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she will save herself from the last disgrace; and that, if she must fall, she will fall by no ignoble hand.

2. It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France, then the Dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in—glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy. Oh, what a revolution! and what an heart must I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall!

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1 **The great lady,** the Queen of France, Marie Antoinette, Archduchess of Austria, born 1755, married to the Duke of Berri (afterwards Louis XVI. of France) in 1770. She became very unpopular, and every public calamity was laid to her charge. Louis was executed on June 21, and the queen on October 16, 1793. That was the turning-point of the Revolution.

2 **A sovereign,** her mother, Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, who bravely resisted Frederick the Great, and rescued the imperial crown for her husband, Francis I.

Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult.

3. But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators, has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more, shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.

ROBERT BURNS.

1. Robert Burns was an Ayrshire ploughman; but beneath the peasant's rough dress there shone poetic fire as pure and bright as the world has ever seen. Thirty-seven years of sorrow and struggle, with one or two brief gleams of prosperity, made up the poet's span of life.

2. He was born on the 25th of January 1759, in a cottage not far from the Bridge of Doon, in the parish of Alloway,[1] in Ayrshire. His father, who was then a gardener and nursery-man, built with his own hands the walls within which Robert first saw the light.

3. Going to school at six years of age, the boy fought his way bravely through the mysteries of reading, writing, and arithmetic; and at the age of eleven he had acquired a very fair amount of elementary education. This, with some evening lessons received from his father afterwards, "a fortnight's French," and a summer quarter at land-surveying, was all the instruction the poet ever got.

4. He had a few books on his humble shelf, from which he was able to derive both pleasure and profit. The *Spectator*, the English poems of Alexander Pope, and the Scottish poems of Allan Ramsay[2] were there; and by-and-by Thomson's[3] *Seasons*, Shenstone's[4] *Pastoral*

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1 **Alloway**, 2½ miles south of Ayr.

2 **Allan Ramsay**, Scottish poet; wrote *The Gentle Shepherd*, *The Evergreen*, etc. (1685–1758.)

3 **Thomson, James**, poet; wrote *The Seasons*, *The Castle of Indolence*, *Rule Britannia*, etc. (1700–1748.)

4 **Shenstone**, William, poet; wrote *The Schoolmistress*, *The Pastoral Ballad*, etc. (1714–1763.)

ROBERT BURNS.

Ballad, Sterne's[1] *Tristram Shandy*, and Mackenzie's[2] *Man of Feeling*, were added to the little company of silent friends.

5. His father having become a farmer, Robert and his brother Gilbert worked on the farm as ploughmen. It was then, as he held the shafts of the plough out on the fields of Mossgiel,[3] amid the birds and the wild-flowers, that Burns the poet learned his finest lessons, and had his heart attuned to Nature's melodies.

6. A little heap of leaves and stubble, torn to pieces by the ruthless plough-share, one cold November day, exposes to the frosty air a poor little field-mouse, that

1 **Sterne**, Laurence, divine and novelist; wrote *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, and *Sermons*. (1713–1768.)

2 **Mackenzie**, Henry, Scottish lawyer and novelist; wrote *The Man of Feeling*, *The Man of the World*, etc. (1745–1831.)

3 **Mossgiel**, near Mauchline in Ayrshire, 8 miles south-east of Kilmarnock.

starts frightened from its ruined home. The poet-ploughman pauses to look on what he has done; and at once his tender heart swells into song. Again, on an April day, the crushing of a crimson-tipped daisy beneath the upturned furrow draws from him a sweet and pitiful lament, varied with exquisite comparisons. In such true wild-flowers of poesy did Burns's fancy revel.

7. But the ploughing that yielded these poetical gems was profitless in other respects. The farm was a failure, and the outlook was so hopeless that Burns resolved to sail for Jamaica, in the hope of obtaining a stewardship on a sugar-plantation. Wishing to leave behind him some memorial of himself, and anxious also to raise a little money to meet his expenses, he had six hundred copies of his poems printed at Kilmarnock (1786).

8. The little volume sold rapidly, and the poet had a profit of nearly twenty guineas from his venture. His passage was taken. His chest was on the way to Greenock. His farewell to the bonnie banks of Ayr was written in the touching song, *The gloomy night is gathering fast.* Then a friend of his received a letter from Dr. Blacklock of Edinburgh, himself a poet, in which Burns's poems were spoken of in terms of the highest praise, and a great future was predicted for their author.

9. That letter changed the current of Burns's life, and kept him in his native land. He at once abandoned his idea of emigrating, and went to Edinburgh, to discover what fortune might have in store for him there. He arrived in that city in November 1786, with very few shillings in his purse, and not a single letter of introduction to win a friend.

10. No letters were needed. He was already well

known in the metropolis by his poems, which had unlocked all hearts and doors for the admission of the singer with so sweet a note. Burns became the rage. Earls, historians, novelists, moral philosophers, listened with applause to the brilliant talk of this rustic of twenty-seven, fresh from the plough. They asked select friends to meet him at dinner. They subscribed for a second edition of his poems, by which he cleared nearly £500. When they had thoroughly spoiled him with their flattery, they threw him aside for some fresh novelty, neglected him, and almost forgot his existence.

11. The story of the remaining ten years of his life, except for the immortal works of his later years, is a tale of deep sadness, and had best be briefly told. He took a farm near Dumfries—the farm of Ellisland, on the Nith—and settled down to country life there with his newly-married wife, Jean Armour.

12. The farm was not successful. In vain Burns tried to raise good crops from its stubborn soil. He was therefore glad when he obtained, through the interest of a friend, the office of exciseman for the district. The sum he derived from this employment—never above £70 a year—but ill repaid him for the time its duties cost, and the dangers of that unsettled, convivial life, to which his excitable nature was thus exposed. In 1791, he gave up the farm and went to live in Dumfries on his slender income as exciseman.

13. A third edition of his poems, enriched with the inimitable *Tam o' Shanter*, which he had written at Ellisland, came out two years later. But the sand of his life-glass had not long to run. Sickness, debt, "the proud man's contumely," and the bitter dregs of his dissipated habits, cast heavy clouds on the closing scenes

of his short pathetic life. He died at Dumfries on the 21st of July 1796.

14. It is chiefly for his songs that the memory of Robert Burns is so dear to his countrymen. But the beautiful domestic picture of *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, the noble *Elegy on Captain Matthew Henderson*, the mad revelry of *The Jolly Beggars*, and the weird extravagance of *Tam o' Shanter*, display the versatility of his genius, and raise him to the highest rank among British bards.

SUMMARY OF BURNS'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year.	Age.	
1759		Born at Alloway, near Ayr, January 25.
1765	6	Goes to school.
1766	7	Family removes to Mount Oliphant farm.
1773	14	His regular schooling ends—He works on the farm.
1774	15	Writes his first song, *Oh, once I loved a bonnie lass* (Nelly Kilpatrick).
1777	18	Family removes to Lochlea (Tarbolton).
1784	25	Death of his father—Takes with his brother Gilbert the farm of Mossgiel—First acquaintance with Jean Armour.
1785	26	Writes *To a Mouse*—*The Cotter's Saturday Night*—*The Jolly Beggars.*
1786	27	Writes *To a Mountain Daisy*—Publishes a volume of *Poems* at Kilmarnock to raise money to take him to Jamaica—Letter from Dr. Blacklock—Goes to Edinburgh.
1787	28	Publishes second (Edinburgh) edition of his *Poems.*
1788	29	Takes Ellisland farm near Dumfries—Marries Jean Armour.
1789	30	Writes *To Mary in Heaven.*
1790	31	Made exciseman—Writes *Elegy on Captain Matthew Henderson*—*Tam o' Shanter.*
1791	32	Goes to live in Dumfries.
1793	34	Publishes third edition of his *Poems*—Writes *Scots wha hae.*
1796	37	Dies at Dumfries, July 21.

SELECTIONS FROM BURNS.

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

[This poem was written in 1785, when Burns was twenty-six years old. According to his brother Gilbert, the poet often said that there was to him something peculiarly venerable in the phrase, "Let us worship God," used by the sober head of a family introducing evening worship. That feeling suggested the central picture of the poem, which describes what Burns may have witnessed in his father's house; but its idea and even its title were suggested by Fergusson's *Farmer's Ingle*. The poem is a very sweet domestic idyl—a faithful picture of Scottish peasant life; but in some parts the pompous diction bears traces of the influence of Pope.]

1. My loved, my honoured, much-respected friend,[1]
No mercenary bard[2] his homage pays;
With honest pride I scorn each selfish end—
My dearest meed,[3] a friend's esteem and praise.
To you I sing, in simple Scottish lays,
The lowly train in life's sequestered scene;
The native feelings strong, the guileless ways;
What Aiken in a cottage would have been:
Ah! though his worth unknown, far happier there, I ween.

2. November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;[4]
The short'ning winter day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh:
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose;
The toil-worn cotter frae his labour goes
(This night his weekly moil is at an end),
Collects his spades, his mattocks, and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And, weary, o'er the moor his course does hameward bend.

---

1 **Friend,** Mr. Robert Aiken of Ayr.
2 **Mercenary bard,** a poet who is paid for his flattering verses.
3 **My dearest meed,** my best reward: supply "being" to make an absolute phrase.
4 **Sugh,** a rushing sound.

3 At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
Th' expectant wee things, toddlin',[1] stacher[2] through
To meet their dad, wi' flichterin'[3] noise and glee.
His wee bit ingle,[4] blinkin' bonnily,
His clean hearth-stane, his thrifty wifie's smile,
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
And makes him quite forget his labour and his toil.

4. Belyve,[5] the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, among the farmers roun':
Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some tentie[6] rin
A canny errand to a neebor town.
Their eldest hope, their Jenny, woman grown,
In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in her ee,
Comes hame, perhaps to show a braw new gown,
Or déposit her sair-won penny-fee,[7]
To help her parents dear, if they in hardship be.

5 Wi' joy unfeigned, brothers and sisters meet,
And each for other's weelfare kindly spiers.
The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed, fleet;
Each tells the uncos[8] that he sees or hears.
The parents, partial, eye their hopeful years;
Anticipation forward points the view.
The mother wi' her needle and her shears
Gars auld claes look amaist as weel's the new;
The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

6. Their master's and their mistress's command
The younkers a' are warnëd to obey,

1 **Toddlin'**, tottering.
2 **Stacher**, stagger.
3 **Flichterin'**, fluttering.
4 **Ingle**, household fire.
5 **Belyve**, by-and-by.
6 **Tentie**, heedful.
7 **Sair-won penny-fee**, hard-earned wages.
8 **Uncos**, strange things.

And mind their labours wi' an eydent[1] hand,
And ne'er, though out o' sight, to jauk[2] or play:
"And oh! be sure to fear the Lord alway;
And mind your duty, duly, morn and night.
Lest in temptation's path ye gang astray,
Implore his counsel and assisting might:
They never sought in vain that sought the Lord aright."

7. But, hark! a rap comes gently to the door;
Jenny, wha kens the meaning o' the same,
Tells how a neebor lad cam o'er the moor,
To do some errands, and convoy her hame.
The wily mother sees the conscious flame
Sparkle in Jenny's ee, and flush her cheek,
Wi' heart-struck anxious care, inquires his name,
While Jenny hafflins[3] is afraid to speak;
Weel pleased the mother hears it's nae wild, worthless rake.

8. Wi' kindly welcome, Jenny brings him ben[4]—
A strappin' youth; he taks the mother's eye.[5]
Blithe Jenny sees the visit's no ill ta'en;
The father cracks[6] of horses, pleughs, and kye.[7]
The youngster's artless heart o'erflows wi' joy,
But blate and laithfu',[8] scarce can weel behave;
The mother, wi' a woman's wiles, can spy
What makes the youth sae bashfu' and sae grave,
Weel pleased to think her bairn's respected like the lave.[9]

9. O happy love!—where love like this is found;
O heart-felt raptures! bliss beyond compare!
I've pacëd much this weary, mortal round,
And sage experience bids me this declare.—

1 **Eydent**, diligent.
2 **Jauk**, trifle.
3 **Hafflins**, partly.
4 **Ben**, into the parlour. In Scottish phrase, "but an' ben" means kitchen and parlour.
5 **Takes the mother's eye**, wins her favour.
6 **Cracks**, talks.
7 **Kye**, cows.
8 **Blate and laithfu'**, shamefaced and bashful.
9 **The lave**, the rest.

If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms, breathe out the tender tale
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the evening gale.

* * * * *

10. But now the supper crowns their simple board,
The halesome parritch,[1] chief of Scotia's food;
The soupe[2] their only hawkie[3] does afford,
That 'yont the hallan[4] snugly chows her cood.
The dame brings forth, in complimental mood,
To grace the lad, her weel-hained kebbuck[5] fell;
And aft he's prest, and aft he ca's it guid.
The frugal wifie, garrulous, will tell
How 'twas a towmond auld,[6] sin' lint was i' the bell.[7]

11. The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face
They round the ingle form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big ha' Bible,[8] ance his father's pride;
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets[9] wearing thin and bare;
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide
He wales[10] a portion with judicious care;
And "Let us worship God," he says, with solemn air.

12. They chant their artless notes[11] in simple guise;
They tune their hearts—by far the noblest aim:

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1 **Halesome parritch,** wholesome porridge, made of oat-meal.

2 **Soupe,** drop of milk.

3 **Hawkie,** cow.

4 **'Yont the hallan,** on the other side of the partition between the dwelling-house and the byre.

5 **Weel-hained kebbuck,** well-kept cheese. **Fell** is tasty.

6 **A towmond auld,** a twelvemonth old.

7 **Sin' lint was i' the bell,** since flax was in the flower.

8 **Ha' Bible,** hall Bible; family Bible.

9 **Lyart haffets,** gray temples. Compare—

"The lyart locks o' Howden's hair."
Ballad of Jamie Telfer.

10 **Wales,** selects.

11 **Artless notes,** in singing psalms. "Dundee's," "Martyrs," and "Elgin" are the names of well-known Scottish psalm-tunes.

Perhaps "Dundee's" wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive "Martyrs," worthy of the name;
Or noble "Elgin" beets[1] the heaven-ward flame—
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays.
Compared with these, Italian trills are tame;
The tickled ears no heart-felt raptures raise;
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise.

13. The priest-like father reads the sacred page,—
How Abram[2] was the friend of God on high;
Or Moses bade eternal warfare wage
With Amalek's ungracious progeny;
Or how the royal bard did groaning lie
Beneath the stroke of Heaven's avenging ire;
Or Job's pathetic plaint and wailing cry;
Or rapt Isaiah's[3] wild, seraphic fire;
Or other holy seers that tune the sacred lyre.

14. Perhaps the Christian volume[4] is the theme,—
How guiltless blood for guilty man was shed;
How He, who bore in heaven the second name,
Had not on earth whereon to lay his head;
How his first followers and servants sped,
The precepts sage they wrote to many a land:
How he who lone in Patmos[5] banishëd
Saw in the sun a mighty angel stand,
And heard great Bab'lon's doom pronounced by Heaven's command.

15. Then kneeling down, to Heaven's eternal King,
The saint, the father, and the husband prays:

---

1 **Beets**, adds fuel to; heightens.

2 **How Abram, etc.** Well-known passages of Old Testament history, relating to Abraham, Moses, David ("the royal bard"), Job, Isaiah, etc.

3 **Rapt Isaiah.** Adopted from Pope's *Messiah*.

4 **The Christian volume**, the New Testament.

5 **He who lone in Patmos**, the apostle and evangelist John, who was banished to the isle of Patmos, in the Ægean Sea, where he had the visions described in the Apocalypse, and referred to in the poem.

Hope "springs exulting on triumphant wing,"[1]
That thus they all shall meet in future days;
There ever bask in uncreated rays,
No more to sigh or shed the bitter tear,
Together hymning their Creator's praise,
In such society, yet still more dear,
While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

16. Compared with this,[2] how poor religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power, incensed, the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But, haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul,
And in his book of life the inmates poor enrol.

17. Then homeward all take off their several way:
The youngling cottagers retire to rest;
The parent-pair their secret homage[3] pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request
That He who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way his wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside.

18. From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad.
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings—
"An honest man's the noblest work of God;"[4]

---

1 **Springs exulting, etc.** A quotation from Pope's *Windsor Forest*.

2 **Compared with this, etc.** There is a similar contrast between simple genuine worship and the pomp of ritualism in Cowper's *Task*, book ii.

3 **Secret homage**, private devotions.

4 **An honest man's, etc.** Also from Pope, one of Burns's favourite authors when a young man.

And, certes,[1] in fair virtue's heavenly road
The cottage leaves the palace far behind.
What is a lordling's pomp?—a cumbrous load,
Disguising oft the wretch of human kind,
Studied in arts of hell, in wickedness refined!

19. O Scotia![2] my dear, my native soil,
For whom my warmest wish to Heaven is sent,
Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content!
And oh! may Heaven their simple lives prevent
From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!
Then, howe'er crown and coronets be rent,
A virtuous populace may rise the while,
And stand a wall of fire around their much-loved isle.

20. O Thou, who poured the patriotic tide
That streamed through Wallace's undaunted heart,
Who dared to nobly stem tyrannic pride,
Or nobly die, the second glorious part
(The patriot's God peculiarly Thou art,
His friend, inspirer, guardian, and reward),
Oh, never, never Scotia's realm desert,
But still the patriot and the patriot-bard
In bright succession raise, her ornament and guard!

A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT.

[This spirited song is the best expression in Burns—perhaps in the language—of his favourite idea that true manliness consists not in what a man has, but in what he is. Never before was honest independence of character so eloquently praised. Burns wrote of the piece that if a critic were right in saying that "love and wine were the exclusive themes of song writing," then it was no song; but, he added, it "will be allowed, I think, to be two or three pretty good prose thoughts converted into rhyme."]

1 Certes, truly. 2 Scotia. Three syllables.

1. Is there,[1] for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that?
The coward slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that:
The rank[2] is but the guinea-stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that!

2. What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden gray,[3] and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that:
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that!

3. Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Though hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof[4] for a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
His riband, star, and a' that;
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that!

4. A king can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith, he maunna fa' that!

---

1 **Is there.** The construction is both elliptical and inverted. Construe thus: "Is there [one] that hangs his head, and a' that, for honest poverty? If there be such, we pass him by—the coward slave," etc.

2 **The rank,** etc. Thackeray, the novelist, has paraphrased these lines thus: "Marry, saith the minnesinger, that the rank is but the stamp of the guinea, the man is the gold."

3 **Wear hodden gray,** wear clothes made of coarse cloth.

4 **Coof** (pronounce *kif*, or to rhyme with French *bœuf*), fool; ninny.

For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher ranks than a' that.

5. Then let us pray that come it may—
As come it will for a' that—
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree,[1] and a' that:
For a' that, and a' that,
It's comin' yet for a' that,
That man to man, the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that!

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

[This is one of the poems that mark Burns as a poet of nature—as one whose mind delighted to dwell on simple natural objects, to weave fancies around them, and to find in them emblems of human life. Thus the daisy about to perish not only draws forth Burns's pity, but sets him a-thinking on the fate of man driven to the brink of ruin by human pride or suffering. The full title of the poem is, "*To a Mountain Daisy, on turning one down with the Plough in April 1786.*"]

1. Wee, modest, crimson-tippëd flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure[2]
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

2. Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,[3]
The bonnie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,[4]
Wi' speckled breast,

---

1 **Bear the gree**, win the prize.
2 **Amang the stoure**, in the dust.
3 **It's no thy neebor sweet**, etc., "It is not the lark that now presses thee to the earth."
4 **Dewy weet**, the grass wet with dew.

When upward springing, blithe, to greet
The purpling east.[1]

3. Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted[2] forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

4. The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and wa's maun[3] shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield[4]
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,[5]
Unseen, alane.

5. There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawie bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise:
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

* * * * *

6. Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starred!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

7. Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,

---

1 **The purpling east,** the sunrise.
2 **Glinted,** peeped.
3 **Maun,** must.
4 **Random bield,** chance shelter.
5 **Histie stibble-field,** dry stubble-field.

By human pride or cunning driven,
To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
He ruined sink!

8. Even thou who mourn'st the daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

[The subject of these exquisite verses was Mary Campbell, or "Highland Mary," with whom Burns fell in love in 1786. He proposed marriage to her and was accepted. She left her situation and went to her home in Ayrshire to prepare for her marriage. On a Sunday in May, the lovers parted on the banks of the river Ayr, exchanging Bibles, and vowing to be true to each other. Burns never saw her again. She died in October. Six years afterwards, when living a wretched life at Dumfries, he wrote this poem, on the anniversary of her death. It does not contain a single word that is purely Scottish.]

1. Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,[1]
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

2. That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove,

---

1 **Thou ling'ring star, etc.** Burns composed the song as he lay in bed early in the morning. Through the window of his room he saw a star twinkling.

Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace:
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

3. Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning green;
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar
Twined amorous round the raptured scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray—
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of wingëd day.

4. Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

WILLIAM COWPER.

1. The Rev. Dr. John Cowper, a royal chaplain, the son of a judge, and the nephew of a lord chancellor, was rector of Great Berkhampstead in Hertfordshire, when his son William was born there in 1731. A tender mother —a lady of high descent—watched the infancy and childhood of the boy. By her knee was his happiest place, where he often amused himself by marking out the flowered pattern of her dress on paper with a pin, taking a child's delight in his simple skill.

2. Cowper was only six years old when this fond mother died: thus early on the childish head did the pitiless storm begin to beat. A sad little face, looking from the nursery window, saw a dark hearse moving slowly from the door. More than fifty years after that day, an old man, in a brief "lucid interval" of his incurable madness, bent over a picture sent him by a friend, and saw in it the never-forgotten image of that kindest earthly friend from whom he had so long been severed. There are no more touching lines in English poetry or prose than Cowper's verses *On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture out of Norfolk*.

3. After his mother's death he was sent to a boarding-school in Market Street in Hertfordshire. The bullying and persecution he suffered there at the hands of a senior scholar, crushed his tender young spirit, and probably sowed the seeds of the madness which wrecked

WILLIAM COWPER.

his life. He afterwards spent seven years at Westminster School, which were less unpleasant to the timid boy, though there too he had to take his full share of buffeting and sneers.

4. The law being his appointed profession, Cowper entered an attorney's office at eighteen, and there spent three years. This period and a few succeeding years formed almost the only spot of sunshine in the poet's life. Many a hearty laugh echoed through the gloomy office where Cowper and his fellow-apprentice—afterwards Lord Chancellor Thurlow—made-believe that they were studying English law. Cowper confesses that they were "constantly employed from morning till night in giggling and making giggle."

5. Called to the bar in 1754, he lived for some time an idle agreeable life, in his Temple chambers, writing a

little for the serials of the day, and taking a share in the wit-combats of the "Nonsense Club," which consisted nearly altogether of Westminster men.

6. In 1763, he was nominated to the post of Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords. He was unexpectedly summoned to the bar of the House to be examined as to his fitness for the office. The prospect of this terrible ordeal—this "mortal poison" as he called it—affected him so deeply that his mind gave way. He tried to kill himself, and a private asylum at St. Albans became for eighteen months the refuge of the afflicted man.

7. Religious melancholy was the form of the mental disease from which he suffered more or less till the end of his days. The friendship of the Unwins was the great blessing of his life. After his recovery from his first attack, he became acquainted with this kind family at Huntingdon. It consisted of the Rev. Morley Unwin, his wife Mary Unwin, and their son and daughter. The friendship grew so strong that Cowper went in 1766 to live in their calm and cheerful home.

8. On the death of the good clergyman in the following year—by a fall from his horse—the widow and her daughter went to live at Olney in Buckinghamshire. Thither Cowper accompanied them as a matter of course, for he was now unalterably one of the quiet household.

9. Here the timid spirit nestled peacefully. A walk with his dog by the reedy banks of the Ouse, a round of visits to the cottages of the neighbouring poor, the writing of hymns for his friend John Newton,[1] the curate of the parish, filled up his quiet days for a time. But a second fit of madness came in 1773, and all was dark for more than three years.

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1 **John Newton,** theologian and poet; wrote sermons and hymns. (1725-1807.)

10. After his recovery, he felt the need of some serious and regular work, and as he had already shown some power in writing verses, he resolved to make poetry the business of his life. His first volume was issued in 1782. It contained three powerful satires—*Truth*, *Table-talk*, and *Expostulation*—with poems on *Error*, *Hope*, *Charity*, and kindred subjects. Though no brilliant success rewarded the effort, thoughtful men like Samuel Johnson and Benjamin Franklin recognized in the recluse of fifty a true poet.

11. The amusing and delightful ballad of *John Gilpin* appealed to a wider circle of readers. The widow of Sir Robert Austen, who had lately gone to live at Olney, told him the story in order to cheer him. The ballad in which he reproduced it is perhaps the best known of all Cowper's writings. Like some of his more serious works, it reveals the sunny humour which lurked under the shy and sensitive moods of the literary hermit.

12. To Lady Austen, also, Cowper owed the origin of his greatest poem, *The Task*—so called because the work was prescribed to him by that lady. She asked him to write some blank verse, and when he required her to suggest a subject, she playfully proposed *The Sofa*. The "task" was accepted. From a humorous historical sketch of the improvement in seats—the three-legged stool growing into the softly-cushioned sofa—the poet glides into the pleasures of a country walk, and draws a striking contrast between rural and city life, lavishing loving praise on the former.

13. In the second book, entitled *The Time-Piece*, he denounces slavery, proclaims the blessings of peace among the nations, and ridicules fashionable preachers. The other four books of *The Task* are entitled *The Garden*,

The Winter Evening, *The Winter Morning Walk*, and *The Winter Walk at Noon*. In all these poems we see reflected the peaceful recreations, the gentle nature, the wisdom and the human tenderness of this amiable man.

14. *The Task*, which was published in 1785, took the hearts of all Englishmen by storm; and its author was at once raised to the first rank among English poets. Accompanying the poem was another entitled *Tirocinium, or a Review of Schools*, in which the poet strongly recommended private tuition in preference to education at a public school. The poem was no doubt suggested by the poet's own sad experiences in early life.

15. The chief work of Cowper's later years was his *Translation of Homer into English Verse*. By working regularly at the rate of forty lines a day, he finished the work in a few years, and it was published in 1791.

16. Kind friends of his youth drew around the old man in his last years. They procured for him a royal pension of £300 a year. His cousin, Lady Hesketh, induced him to take a villa at Weston, about a mile from his well-loved Olney. About 1794, the gloom of madness fell again on his mind; and only for very brief intervals thereafter was there any light for him on this side of the grave.

17. Mary Unwin, his faithful friend of many years, died in 1796. A sad sight it must have been to see the gray-haired sufferer standing by the coffin of her whose gentle ministerings had cheered and solaced him for nearly thirty years. In less than four years thereafter Cowper closed his eyes for ever on the earth which had been to him indeed a place of many sorrows.

18. Cowper's *Letters*, written to his friends during his long life, are almost as well known as his poems. Robert Southey has called him "the best of English

letter-writers;" and there is no exaggeration in the praise. Loathing all affectation, Cowper preferred what he called "talking letters," and he wrote them in fine simple English, and with a sweet and delicate play of humour, which is like sunshine on a pebbled stream.

SUMMARY OF COWPER'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year.	Age.	
1731	.....	Born at Great Berkhampstead, November 26.
1737	6	Death of his mother—He is sent to school at Market Street.
1745	14	Sent to Westminster School.
1749	18	Articled to an attorney.
1754	23	Called to the bar.
1763	32	Appointed Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords—Goes mad—Sent to Asylum at St. Albans.
1766	35	Goes to live with the Unwins at Huntingdon.
1767	36	Goes with Mrs. Unwin to Olney—Writes *Hymns*.
1773	42	Second fit of insanity (3 years).
1782	51	Publishes first volume of poetry—*Truth*, *Table Talk*, *Expostulation*, etc.
1783	52	Writes *John Gilpin*.
1785	54	Publishes *The Task*.
1786	55	Removes to Weston with Lady Hesketh.
1787	56	Third attack of insanity (6 months).
1791	60	Publishes *Translation of Homer*.
1794	63	Last attack of insanity.
1796	65	Death of Mrs. Unwin.
1799	68	Revised edition of Homer.
1800	69	Dies, April 25.

SELECTIONS FROM COWPER.

THE SOFA.

BOOK I. OF "THE TASK."

1. *The Task* was written—at least it was begun—without any definite plan or purpose. It is a medley—a miscellaneous collection of reflections and descriptions. The name both of the first book and of the whole poem (which consists of six books) was the result of an accident—it might be called a joke. One evening when sitting in his house at Olney, one of his friends (Lady Austen) advised him to try to write in blank verse. "On what subject?" he asked. "Oh," she replied, "you can write on anything: take the sofa." He took "The Sofa," and began his prescribed "task" forthwith, and it occupied him very pleasantly for the next year or two.

2. The poem opens, in a manner justifying its title, with an account of the pedigree of the sofa—"a historical deduction of seats." The tone is mock heroic, the opening words, "I sing the sofa," being an imitation of those of Virgil's *Æneid*, "Arma virumque cano" (Arms and the man I sing).

I sing the Sofa.[1] I who lately sang
Truth, Hope, and Charity,[2] and touched[3] with awe
The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,
Escaped[4] with pain from that adventurous flight,
Now seek repose upon an humbler theme:
The theme though humble,[5] yet august and proud
The occasion—for the Fair[6] commands the song.

1 **I sing the Sofa,** "The Sofa is the subject of my poem."

2 **Truth, Hope, and Charity,** the titles of three poems in his first published volume (1782).

3 **And touched, etc.,** "And I who touched the solemn chords"—namely, of the poet's lyre **Solemn,** because the themes were sacred.

4 **Escaped,** having escaped.

5 **The theme though humble,** "though the theme *be* humble."

6 **The Fair,** a lady—namely, Lady Austen.

Time was,[1] when clothing, sumptuous or for use,
Save their own painted[2] skins, our sires had none.[3]
As yet black breeches were not; satin smooth,[4]
Or velvet soft, or plush[5] with shaggy pile:
The hardy chief upon the rugged rock,
Washed by the sea, or on the gravelly bank
Thrown up by wintry torrents roaring loud,
Fearless of wrong, reposed his weary strength.
Those barbarous ages past,[6] succeeded next
The birthday of Invention; weak at first,
Dull in design, and clumsy to perform.[7]
Joint-stools were then created; on three legs
Upborne they stood: three legs upholding firm
A massy slab, in fashion square or round.
On such a stool immortal Alfred[8] sat,
And swayed the sceptre of his infant realms:[9]
And such in ancient halls and mansions drear
May still be seen; but perforated sore,[10]
And drilled in holes, the solid oak is found,
By worms voracious eating through and through.
At length a generation more refined
Improved the simple plan; made three legs four,
Gave them a twisted form vermicular,[11]
And o'er the seat, with plenteous wadding stuffed,

---

1 **Time was, etc.** The account of the origin of the sofa extends from this line to line 88. It is of course a travesty of history, but the mock-heroic tone is well sustained.

2 **Painted,** stained with *woad*, a blue vegetable dye. [ing."

3 **None,** an adjective, describing "cloth-

4 **Satin smooth,** smooth satin was not; did not exist.

5 **Plush,** cloth woven so as to retain the "pile" or hairy surface on one side.

6 **Ages past,** "*being* past:" an absolute phrase, equal to, "when those barbarous ages were past."

7 **To perform,** for performing, or in performance: a gerundial infinitive.

8 **Alfred,** the Great, King of England (871–901); called "immortal" because his fame is undying.

9 **Infant realms.** The several states in England (Wessex, Mercia, etc.) had been united into one kingdom only fifty years before Alfred began to reign.

10 **But perforated sore, etc.** Construe thus: "The solid oak is found to be sorely perforated (pierced) and drilled in holes by voracious (greedy) worms eating through and through."

11 **Vermicular,** wormlike. (Lat. *vermiculus*, a little worm, from *vermis*, a worm.)

Induced[1] a splendid cover, green and blue,
Yellow and red, of tapestry richly wrought
And woven close, or needlework sublime.
There might you see the peony spread wide,
The full-blown rose, the shepherd and his lass,
Lap-dog and lambkin[2] with black staring eyes,
And parrots with twin cherries in their beak.
Now came the cane from India, smooth and bright
With Nature's varnish; severed into stripes,
That interlaced each other, these supplied
Of texture firm a lattice-work, that braced
The new machine, and it became a chair.
But restless[3] was the chair: the back erect
Distressed the weary loins, that felt no ease;
The slippery seat betrayed the sliding part
That pressed it, and the feet hung dangling down,
Anxious in vain to find the distant floor.
These for the rich; the rest, whom fate had placed
In modest mediocrity, content
With base materials, sat on well-tanned hides,
Obdurate[4] and unyielding, glassy smooth,
With here and there a tuft of crimson yarn,
Or scarlet crewel,[5] in the cushion fixed,
If cushion might be called, what[6] harder seemed
Than the firm oak of which the frame was formed.
No want of timber then was felt[7] or feared

1 **Induced,** drew or spread: an unusual meaning of the word. (Lat. *in*, on; *duco*, I lead.)

2 **Lambkin,** a diminutive form; like mannikin. The suffix *-kin* is a compound of *-ock* (bull-ock) and *-en* (chick-en).

3 **Restless,** not giving rest: the usual meaning is, without rest; uneasy. The former is the *objective*, the latter the *subjective*, meaning.

4 **Obdur'ate.** Accent on the second syllable; usually on the first. Compare Milton:—

"Mixed with obdur'ate pride and steadfast hate." *Paradise Lost*, i. 58.

5 **Crewel,** yarn twisted round a ball.

6 **If cushion might be called, what.** "If that might be called cushion, *which*." But the noun-clause "what....formed" may be taken as the nominative to "might be called."

7 **Then was felt.** Implying that it was felt in Cowper's time. The reason was that, before the use of coal became general, great quantities of forest wood were used for fuel.

In Albion's[1] happy isle. The lumber[2] stood
Ponderous and fixed by its own massy weight.
But elbows still were wanting; these, some say,
An alderman of Cripplegate[3] contrived;
And some ascribe the invention to a priest,
Burly and big, and studious of his ease.
But, rude at first, and not with easy slope
Receding wide, they pressed against the ribs,
And bruised the side; and, elevated high,
Taught the raised shoulders to invade the ears.
Long time elapsed or e'er[4] our rugged sires
Complained, though incommodiously pent in,
And ill at ease behind; the ladies first
'Gan murmur, as became the softer sex.
Ingenious Fancy, never better pleased
Than when employed to accommodate the fair,
Heard the sweet moan with pity, and devised
The soft settee;[5] one elbow at each end,
And in the midst an elbow, it received,
United yet divided, twain at once.
So sit two kings of Brentford[6] on one throne;
And so two citizens who take the air,
Close packed, and smiling, in a chaise and one.[7]

---

1 **Albion,** Great Britain, but properly Scotland, once called Albany. The root *alp* or *alb* means a height, rock, or hill.

2 **Lumber,** furniture; now useless furniture. A pawnbroker's store was called a *Lombard*-room, from the Lombards (of North Italy), who were the pawnbrokers as well as the bankers of the Middle Ages. The tendency of articles to accumulate there till they become useless leads us to the common meaning of the word. In North America, felled timber is called *lumber*, and the man who fells it is a *lumberer*.

3 **Cripplegate,** a district of London, named after one of the old *gates* of the city (between Aldersgate and Newgate) at which *cripples* gathered seeking charity. In Scotland, the suffix *-gate*, or *-gait*, means, not a door or opening, but a path or street, as Canongate, Cowgate, Nethergate. This is the Mid Eng. *gate*, Swed. *gata*, Dan. *gade*, and Ger. *gasse*.

4 **Or e'er,** "before ever." Sometimes printed "or ere;" but these are two forms of the same word. "Or ever" is used in the Prayer-book version of the Psalms.

5 **Settee,** a long seat with a back, and with arms at the ends, sometimes also one "in the midst."

6 **Brentford,** the county town of Middlesex. An Anglo-Saxon king is said to have given the two chief magistrates of Brentford the title of King. The "two kings" appear on the stage hand-in-hand in the Duke of Buckingham's comedy *The Rehearsal*.

7 **Chaise and one,** a chaise drawn by one horse.

But relaxation of the languid frame,
By soft recumbency of outstretched limbs,
Was bliss reserved for happier days. So slow
The growth of what is excellent; so hard
To attain perfection in this nether world.
Thus first necessity invented stools,
Convenience next suggested elbow chairs,
And luxury the accomplished Sofa last.
The nurse sleeps sweetly, hired to watch the sick
Whom snoring[1] she disturbs. As sweetly he[2]
Who quits the coachbox at the midnight hour,
To sleep within the carriage more secure,[3]
His legs depending[4] at the open door.
Sweet sleep enjoys the curate[5] in his desk,
The tedious rector drawling o'er his head;
And sweet the clerk below. But neither sleep
Of lazy nurse, who snores the sick man dead,[6]
Nor his who quits the box at midnight hour
To slumber in the carriage more secure,
Nor sleep enjoyed by curate in his desk,
Nor yet the dozings of the clerk, are sweet,
Compared with the repose the Sofa yields.

3. But the comforts of the Sofa suggest by contrast the case of those who do not need it. This leads the poet to describe a school-boy's ramble in the country. First he describes rural scenes, and from rural scenes he passes to rural sounds:—

Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds,
Exhilarate[7] the spirit, and restore

---

1 **Snoring.** The active participle; attribute to "she."

2 **He.** Supply *sleeps*.

3 **Secure,** for securely.

4 **Legs depending.** An absolute phrase.

5 **Curate,** *lit.* one who has a *cure* (care) of souls; an assistant to the *rector* or vicar in the Church of England. Properly the *rector* is the ruler of the parish (lay or clerical), and the vicar is his substitute. The *clerk* is a lay officer who in the service leads the responses of the people.

6 **Snores the sick man dead,** "snores the sick man *to death*." *Dead* is an adverb to "snores."

7 **Exhilarate,** cheer; revive.

The tone[1] of languid nature. Mighty winds,
That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood
Of ancient growth, make music not unlike
The dash of ocean on his[2] winding shore,
And lull the spirit while they fill the mind;[3]
Unnumbered branches waving[4] in the blast,
And all their leaves fast fluttering, all at once.
Nor less composure waits upon the roar
Of distant floods, or on the softer voice
Of neighbouring fountain, or of rills that slip
Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they fall
Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length
In matted grass, that, with a livelier green,
Betrays the secret[5] of their silent course.
Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,
But animated nature sweeter still,
To soothe and satisfy the human ear.
Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one[6]
The livelong[7] night; nor these alone whose notes
Nice-fingered art[8] must emulate in vain,
But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime
In still repeated circles, screaming loud,
The jay, the pie, and e'en the boding[9] owl,
That hails the rising moon, have charms for me.
Sounds inharmonious in themselves and harsh,

---

1 **The tone,** the healthy state.

2 **His,** ocean's. Thus ocean is personified.

3 **Lull the spirit while they fill the mind,** "soothe the feelings while they supply thoughts to the mind."

4 **Branches waving....leaves fluttering.** Absolute phrases.

5 **Betrays the secret,** enables us to see the direction of the underground current.

6 **And one,** the nightingale (the night-singer; from O. Eng. *galan*, to sing).

7 **Livelong,** living or lasting long.

8 **Nice-fingered art,** the musical art; so called because many instruments are played on with the fingers.

9 **Boding,** foretelling evil. The screech of the owl in the night-time is supposed to be an ill omen. Cowper means to say that he derives pleasure not only from the sweet song of the nightingale, but also from the harsher notes of more common-place birds.

Yet heard in scenes where peace for ever reigns,
And only there, please highly for their sake.[1]

4. He then describes a winter walk over hills to a solitary low-roofed cottage which he calls "the peasant's nest," past a stately colonnade and a "proud alcove" crowning the hill. Thus he rambles on from scene to scene, and from reflection to reflection. On the benefits of labour and active exercise he has this fine passage :—

By ceaseless action all that is subsists.
Constant rotation of the unwearied wheel
That Nature rides upon, maintains her health,
Her beauty, her fertility. She dreads
An instant's pause, and lives but while she moves.
Its own revolvency[2] upholds the world.
Winds from all quarters agitate the air,
And fit the limpid element[3] for use,
Else noxious :[4] oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams.
All feel the freshening impulse, and are cleansed
By restless undulation ; e'en the oak
Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm :
He seems indeed indignant, and to feel
The impression of the blast with proud disdain,
Frowning, as if in his unconscious arm
He held the thunder ; but the monarch owes
His firm stability[5] to what he scorns—
More fixed below, the more disturbed above.
The law by which[6] all creatures else are bound

1 **For their sake,** for the sake of the scenes. This is the principle of "association of ideas" which leads us to admire things not on their own account, but because of the ideas which they call up in our minds.

2 **Revolvency,** power of revolving. The spinning of a top illustrates the truth of this line.

3 **The limpid element,** the air, which is kept clear ("limpid") by the action of the wind.

4 **Else noxious.** An attribute to air = "which would otherwise be noxious."

5 **Owes his firm stability, etc.** Compare Scott's lines :—

"Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow."
Lady of the Lake.

6 **The law by which, etc.** Here begins the poet's application of his principle to the case of man.

Binds man, the lord of all. Himself derives[1]
No mean advantage from a kindred cause,
From strenuous toil his hours of sweetest ease.
The sedentary stretch their lazy length
When custom bids, but no refreshment find,
For none they need: the languid eye, the cheek
Deserted of its bloom, the flaccid, shrunk,
And withered muscle, and the vapid soul,
Reproach their owner with that love of rest
To which he forfeits e'en the rest he loves.
Not such the alert and active. Measure life[2]
By its true worth, the comforts it affords,
And theirs alone seems worthy of the name.
Good health, and, its associate in the most,
Good temper; spirits prompt to undertake,
And not soon spent, though in an arduous task;
The powers of fancy and strong thought are theirs;
E'en age itself seems privileged in them,
With clear exemption from its own defects;[3]
A sparkling eye beneath a wrinkled front
The veteran[4] shows, and, gracing a graybeard
With youthful smiles, descends towards the grave
Sprightly, and old almost without decay.

5. The poet then speaks of the advantage of change of scene. He passes from the sheltered vale to the forest, from the forest to the rock by the sea-shore, and from the sea-shore to the common. In connection with the common, he tells the touching story of crazy Kate:—

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1 **Himself derives, etc.** "Man himself derives no mean advantage (namely, his hours of sweetest ease) from a kindred cause" (namely, from strenuous toil).

2 **Measure life, etc.** This is really, though not in form, a hypothetical sentence. Construe thus: "*If* life be measured by its true worth—to wit, by the comforts it affords —*then* their life alone seems worthy of the name."

3 **Its own defects,** the defects incident to age, such as failure of sight or of hearing, loss of health and strength.

4 **The veteran,** who has been "alert and active."

There often wanders one whom better days
Saw better clad,[1] in cloak of satin trimmed
With lace, and hat with splendid ribband bound.
A serving-maid was she, and fell in love
With one who left her, went to sea, and died.
Her fancy followed him through foaming waves
To distant shores; and she would[2] sit and weep
At what a sailor suffers. Fancy, too,
Delusive most where warmest wishes are,
Would oft anticipate his glad return,
And dream of transports she was not to know.
She heard the doleful tidings of his death—
And never smiled again! and now she roams
The dreary waste; there spends the livelong day,
And there, unless when charity forbids,
The livelong night. A tattered apron hides,
Worn as a cloak, and hardly hides, a gown
More tattered still; and both but ill conceal
A bosom heaved with never-ceasing sighs.
She begs an idle pin of all she meets,
And hoards them in her sleeve; but needful food,
Though pressed with hunger oft, or comelier clothes,
Though pinched with cold, asks never.—Kate is crazed![3]

6. This is followed by a picture of a gipsy encampment:—

I see a column of slow-rising smoke
O'ertop the lofty wood that skirts the wild.
A vagabond[4] and useless tribe there eat
Their miserable meal. A kettle, slung
Between two poles upon a stick transverse,
Receives the morsel—flesh obscene[5] of dog,

1 **Better days....better clad.** The first "better" is an adjective, the second is an adverb.

2 **Would,** was accustomed to.

3 **Kate is crazed.** These words sum up the picture, which has been described with so much faithful detail. "Crazed," is cracked. [settled home.

4 **Vagabond,** wandering; having no

5 **Obscene,** disgusting.

Or vermin, or at best of cock purloined[1]
From his accustomed perch. Hard-faring race!
They pick their fuel out of every hedge,
Which, kindled with dry leaves, just saves unquenched[2]
The spark of life. The sportive wind blows wide
Their fluttering rags, and shows a tawny skin,
The vellum of the pedigree[3] they claim.
Great skill have they in palmistry,[4] and more
To conjure clean away the gold they touch,
Conveying worthless dross[5] into its place;
Loud when they beg, dumb only when they steal.
Strange that a creature rational, and cast
In human mould, should brutalize by choice
His nature! and, though capable of arts
By which the world might profit, and himself,
Self-banished from society, prefer
Such squalid sloth to honourable toil!
Yet even these, though, feigning sickness oft,
They swathe the forehead, drag the limping limb,
And vex their flesh with artificial sores,
Can change their whine into a mirthful note,
When safe occasion offers; and with dance,
And music of the bladder and the bag,[6]
Beguile their woes, and make the woods resound.
Such health and gaiety of heart enjoy
The houseless rovers of the sylvan world;
And, breathing wholesome air, and wandering much,
Need other physic none to heal the effects
Of loathsome diet, penury, and cold.

1 **Purloined**, stolen.

2 **Unquenched**, all but quenched.

3 **Vellum of the pedigree.** A very happy figure. Title-deeds and pedigrees or tables of descent are written on vellum (fine parchment). The dark skin of the gipsies is proof of their descent from some dark-coloured race — Indian or Egyptian.

4 **Palmistry**, fortune-telling by examining the lines in the palm of the hand.

5 **Conveying worthless dross.** Referring to the trick of the gipsy fortune-teller, who requires her hand to be touched with gold, and returns a sham coin in place of the real one that has been used for the purpose.

6 **The bladder and the bag**, the bag-pipes.

7. Reflections on the blessings of civilized life, on the sorrows of the South Sea Islanders, and on the wickedness of great cities —especially of London—lead the poet to contrast town and country life in these lines, with which the book concludes :—

God made the country, and man made the town.
What wonder, then, that health and virtue—gifts
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
That life holds out to all—should most abound,
And least be threatened, in the fields and groves?
Possess ye, therefore, ye who, borne about
In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
But such as art contrives—possess you still
Your element;[1] there only can ye shine;
There only minds like yours can do no harm.
Our groves were planted to console at noon
The pensive wanderer in their shades. At eve,
The moonbeam, sliding softly in between
The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish;
Birds warbling, all the music. We can spare
The splendour of your[2] lamps; they but eclipse
Our softer satellite. Your songs confound
Our more harmonious notes: the thrush departs
Scared, and the offended nightingale is mute.
There is a public mischief in your mirth;
It plagues your country. Folly such as yours,
Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
Has made, what enemies could ne'er have done,
Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,
A mutilated structure, soon to fall.[3]

1 **Possess you still your element,** "hold to the place that befits you"—namely, the town.

2 **Your.** Addressed to the children of luxury.

3 **Soon to fall.** A reference to the breaking off of the North American colonies from the British Empire. The poem was written about the close of the American War.

DETACHED PASSAGES FROM "THE TASK."

[This is the opening of Book II. of *The Task*, entitled *The Time-Piece*. The reflections in it were suggested by the conclusion of the former book. It is an eloquent protest against slavery, showing the poet's heart burning at white heat.]

WAR AND SLAVERY.

Oh for[1] a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity[2] of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more! My ear is pained,
My soul is sick, with every day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is filled.
There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart;
It does not feel for man: the natural bond
Of brotherhood is severed, as the flax
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.
He finds his fellow guilty of a skin[3]
Not coloured like his own; and, having power
To enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause,[4]
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else,
Like kindred drops, been mingled into one.
Thus man devotes[5] his brother, and destroys;
And, worse than all, and most to be deplored,

---

1 **Oh for.** This is an exclamatory sentence. These two words stand for the principal clause, and are equivalent to "I wish I had."

2 **Contiguity.** Continuity would have been a better word. The poet wants unbrokenness of shade, not close contact with it.

3 **Guilty of a skin, etc.** The expression here gains force from condensation. "Man treats his brother as a criminal because he has a dark skin." Compare extracts from "The Sofa," line 209.

4 **For such a worthy cause.** Said in irony, of course.

5 **Devotes,** sets apart and offers up as [a victim.

As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes that Mercy, with a bleeding heart,
Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.[1]
Then what is man? And what man, seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush,
And hang his head to think himself a man?
I would not have a slave[2] to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earned.
No; dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
Just estimation prized above all price,
I had much rather be[3] myself the slave,
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.
We have no slaves at home: then why abroad?
And they themselves, once ferried o'er the wave
That parts us, are emancipate and loosed.
Slaves cannot breathe in England: if their lungs
Receive our air, that moment they are free;
They touch our country,[4] and their shackles fall.
That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it, then,
And let it circulate through every vein
Of all your empire; that, where Britain's power
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.

1 **Inflicted on a beast.** More merciful to his dog than to his slave.

2 **I would not have a slave.** Here the noble outburst of indignation reaches its highest point and its most poetical expression. The passage closing with line 42 is one of the most eloquent in English poetry.

3 **I had rather be.** A form of the conditional mood for "I would rather have to be."

4 **They touch our country, and their shackles fall.** In 1772 a slave named Somerset, brought to England by his master, was turned adrift because he was weak and useless. When he recovered his health (through the kindness chiefly of Mr. Granville Sharp) his master claimed him; but the Court of King's Bench decided that he had no right to him, because slavery did not exist in England. Slavery was abolished throughout the British colonies in 1833.

ENGLAND.

[This also is from *The Time-Piece*. The poet, after deploring the decline of English honour and patriotism, wishes to show that he has by no means lost all pride in his country. In spite of her faults, he loves her. But he returns to "her follies," and denounces the foppish soldiers who have come in place of her former heroes. He refers to Chatham and Wolfe, and despairs of ever again seeing their like. That despair was certainly not warranted.]

England! with all thy faults, I love thee still—
My country! and, while yet a nook is left
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrained to love thee. Though thy clime
Be fickle, and thy year most part deformed
With dripping rains, or withered by a frost,
I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies,
And fields without a flower, for warmer France,
With all her vines; nor for Ausonia's[1] groves
Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bowers.
To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime
Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
Upon thy foes, was never meant my task;[2]
But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
Thy joys and sorrows, with as true a heart
As any thunderer there. And I can feel
Thy follies too; and with a just disdain
Frown at effeminates,[3] whose very looks
Reflect dishonour on the land I love.
How, in the name of soldiership and sense,
Should England prosper, when such things,[4] as smooth
And tender as a girl all essenced o'er
With odours, and as profligate as sweet;

---

1 **Ausonia**, Italy.

2 **Was never meant my task**, "*to be* my task." When Cowper wrote this, he probably had in his mind his failure to appear in the House of Lords from sheer fright, when summoned to the bar. (See the Biography, § 6.)

3 **Effeminates**, unmanly persons.

4 **Such things.** Said in contempt. The description of the military coxcomb of Cowper's time should be compared with Hotspur's description of the fop "perfumed like a milliner" in Shakespeare's *1 Henry IV.*, act i., scene 3.

Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,
And love when they should fight; when such as these
Presume to lay their hand upon the ark
Of her magnificent and awful cause?
Time was when it was praise and boast enough
In every clime, and travel where we might,
That we were born her children—praise enough
To fill the ambition of a private man,
That Chatham's[1] language was his mother tongue,
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.
Farewell those honours, and farewell with them
The hope of such hereafter! They have fallen
Each in his field of glory; one in arms,[2]
And one in council[3]—Wolfe upon the lap
Of smiling victory that moment won,
And Chatham heart-sick of his country's shame!
They made us many soldiers. Chatham, still
Consulting England's happiness at home,
Secured it by an unforgiving frown,
If any wronged her. Wolfe, where'er he fought,
Put so much of his heart into his act,
That his example had a magnet's force,
And all were swift to follow whom all loved.
Those suns are set. Oh, rise some other such,
Or all that we have left is empty talk
Of old achievements, and despair of new!"

---

1 **Chatham,** William Pitt the elder, called the Great Commoner.

2 **One in arms.** General James Wolfe, killed at the Heights of Abraham, near Quebec, in the hour of victory (1759).

3 **One in council.** The Earl of Chatham fell down in an apoplectic fit in the House of Lords, when denouncing the proposal to give up the American War and to let the colonies go. He died at Hayes, his country seat, a few weeks after, aged 77, in 1778.

WINTER.

[The following passage is from Book IV. of *The Task*,—*The Winter Evening*. The poet contrasts the rural amusements of a winter evening with the fashionable ones. The description of the after-supper conversation shows us Cowper in his most earnest vein.]

O Winter, ruler of the inverted year,[1]
Thy scattered hair with sleet like ashes filled,
Thy breath congealed upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapped in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,[2]
But urged by storms along its slippery way,
I love thee all unlovely as thou seem'st,
And dreaded as thou art! Thou hold'st the sun
A prisoner in the yet undawning east,
Shortening his journey between morn and noon,
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,[3]
Down to the rosy west; but kindly still
Compensating his loss[4] with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,
And gathering, at short notice, in one group
The family dispersed, and fixing thought,
Not less dispersed by daylight and its cares.
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturbed Retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted evening know.
No rattling wheels[5] stop short before these gates;

1 **The inverted year**, that part of the year in which there are long nights and short days.

2 **Indebted to no wheels.** The poet appropriately makes the car of winter a sleigh.

3 **Impatient of his stay.** An attribute to "thou."

4 **Compensating his loss, etc.** The loss of daylight is made up for by the prolonged time allowed for social intercourse in the long nights of winter.

5 **No rattling wheels.** The social life he leads and delights in is not that of gay and fashionable people, but is genuine friendliness.

No powdered pert, proficient in the art
Of sounding an alarm, assaults these doors
Till the street rings ;[1] no stationary steeds[2]
Cough their own knell, while, heedless of the sound,
The silent circle fan themselves, and quake :
But here the needle plies its busy task,
The pattern grows, the well-depicted flower,
Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,
Unfolds its bosom ; buds, and leaves, and sprigs,
And curling tendrils, gracefully disposed,
Follow the nimble finger of the fair ;
A wreath that cannot fade, of flowers that blow
With most success when all besides decay.
The poet's or historian's page by one
Made vocal[3] for the amusement of the rest ;
The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds
The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out ;
And the clear voice, symphonious,[4] yet distinct,
And in the charming strife triumphant still,
Beguile the night, and set a keener edge
On female industry : the threaded steel
Flies swiftly, and, unfelt,[5] the task proceeds.
The volume closed,[6] the customary rites
Of the last meal commence. A Roman meal,
Such as the mistress of the world once found
Delicious, when her patriots of high note,
Perhaps by moonlight, at their humble doors,
And under an old oak's domestic shade,
Enjoyed—spare feast ! a radish and an egg !
Discourse ensues, not trivial, yet not dull,

---

1 **Rings**, re-echoes, or rings with the sound.

2 **Stationary steeds**, horses standing at the door, waiting for their owners during a formal call.

3 **Made vocal**, read aloud. "For the amusement of the rest" is prosaic.

4 **Symphonious, yet distinct**, in harmony with the "lyre" (musical instrument), yet forming a separate melody. The "charming strife" is that between the instrument and the voice.

5 **Unfelt**, without being felt to be a task.

6 **The volume closed**. Absolute phrase.

Nor such as with a frown forbids the play
Of fancy, or proscribes the sound of mirth:
Nor do we madly, like an impious world,
Who deem religion frenzy, and the God
That made them an intruder on their joys,
Start at his awful name, or deem his praise
A jarring note. Themes of a graver tone,
Exciting oft our gratitude and love,
While we retrace with memory's pointing wand,
That calls the past to our exact review,
The dangers we have 'scaped, the broken snare,
The disappointed foe, deliverance found
Unlooked for, life preserved, and peace restored—
Fruits of omnipotent, eternal love.
O evenings worthy of the gods! exclaimed
The Sabine bard.[1] O evenings, I reply,
More to be prized and coveted than yours,
As with more illumined, and with nobler truths,
That I, and mine, and those we love, enjoy.

ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE.

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN, ANN BODHAM.

[It was in 1790 that Mrs. Bodham, Cowper's cousin, sent him a miniature likeness of his mother. She had died in 1737, when he was only six years old; yet, he said, "I remember her well, and am an ocular witness of the great fidelity of the copy." He added, when thanking his cousin for the picture, "I remember, too, a multitude of the maternal tendernesses which I received from her, and which have endeared her memory to me beyond expression." The poem breathes this spirit of tender affection and reverence. Cowper addresses the picture as if he were addressing "the dear original," and in a way that combines the simplicity of childhood with the depth of feeling and the earnestness of a man.]

O that those lips had language! Life has passed

---

1 **The Sabine bard,** Horace, the Roman lyric poet; so called because he spent most of his life on a farm near Digentia in the country of the Sabini, given to him by Mæcenas.

With me but roughly since I heard thee last.[1]
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art[2] that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long.
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept[3] were her own;
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian[4] reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.
My mother! when I learned[5] that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?[6]
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss.
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell[7] tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!

1 **Since I heard thee last.** His mother died when he was six years old. He was fifty-nine when he wrote this poem.

2 **The art,** etc., the art of the painter.

3 **As the precept,** etc., "as *if* the precept, the order, came from herself."

4 **Elysian,** delightful; relating to Elysium, supposed by the ancients to be the abode of the blessed after death.

5 **When I learned.** This clause is subordinate to "wast thou conscious."

6 **Life's journey just begun,** "*when* life's journey *was* just begun."

7 **I heard the bell,** etc. These reminiscences are very touching.

But was it such? It was.[1] Where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrows spent,
I learned at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble-coach, and wrapped
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet cap,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! but the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed,—
All this, and more endearing still than all,

---

1 **It was.** It was a last adieu, but not in the sense expected—that of a parting for ever. It was last, because when he meets his mother again there will be no more parting.

Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour[1] interposed too often makes;
All this still legible[2] in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers[3] may;
Perhaps a frail immortal, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.
Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, the jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and smile),—
Could those few pleasant days[4] again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain[5]
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.
Thou,[6] as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed),
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,

1 **Humour**, bad temper.

2 **Still legible.** In a letter to his friend Joseph Hill, Cowper wrote (in 1784), "I can truly say that not a week passes (perhaps I might with equal veracity say a day) in which I do not think of her"—that is, of his mother.

3 **Numbers**, verses; so called because they consist of regularly-measured or numbered feet.

4 **Could those few pleasant days, etc.** An intricate sentence. Construe thus:

a^1 "If those few pleasant hours could again
a^2 If one wish might bring them, [appear,
A. Would I wish them here?"

5 **To constrain, etc.**, "to confine thy spirit once more within its earthly house" —the body.

6 **Thou.** This subject is repeated in line 96. The whole sentence is a simile. The first member, or similitude (introduced by "as"), extends from this line to line 95. The second member, which is the principal clause (introduced by "so") occupies the next four lines.

Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached the shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;"[1]
And thy loved consort[2] on the dangerous tide
Of life has long since anchored by thy side.
But me,[3] scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tossed,
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet oh the thought that thou art safe, and he![4]
That thought is joy, arrive what may[5] to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents passed into the skies.
And now farewell! Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wished is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived[6] my childhood o'er again;
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;
And, while the wings of fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,

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1 **Where tempests, etc.** In a poem "On Death," by Sir Samuel Garth (died 1719), there occurs the line,—

"Where billows never break, nor tempests roar."

Probably Cowper quoted that line from memory.

2 **Loved consort, her husband.**

3 **But me, etc.** These lines are a graphic description of Cowper's state of mind in his later years.

4 **And he,** "and that he *is safe*."

5 **Arrive what may.** A clause of concession.

6 **To have lived.** This foot is an *anapæst* (*sva*), while those of the verse generally are *iambuses* (*xa*).

Time has but half succeeded in his theft –
Thyself removed,[1] thy power to soothe me left. 121

COWPER'S TREATMENT OF HIS HARES.

[This paper was inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. It is a good example of Cowper's prose style—easy, natural, and playful. These are the qualities that give their charm to Cowper's letters to his friends. The paper also affords an interesting example of how natural history may be studied without going to books. The account of the diet of the hares (§§ 11–14) is especially instructive.]

1. In the year 1774, being much indisposed both in mind and body, incapable of diverting myself either with company or books, and yet in a condition that made some diversion necessary, I was glad of anything that would engage my attention without fatiguing it. The children of a neighbour of mine had a leveret[2] given them for a plaything; it was at that time about three months old. Understanding better how to tease the poor creature than to feed it,[3] and soon becoming weary of their charge, they readily consented that their father, who saw it pining and growing leaner every day, should offer it to my acceptance. I was willing enough to take the prisoner under my protection, perceiving that, in the management of such an animal, and in the attempt to tame it, I should find just that sort of employment which my case required.

2. It was soon known among the neighbours that I was pleased with the present, and the consequence was that in a short time I had as many leverets offered to me as would have stocked a paddock.[4] I undertook the care of three, which it is necessary that I should here distinguish by the names I gave them—Puss, Tiney, and Bess. Notwithstanding

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1 **Thyself removed.** Another example of condensed expression. The expansion is: "Though thou thyself art removed, thy power to soothe me is left."

2 **Leveret,** a young hare. [Old Fr. *lerrault*, from Lat. *lepus, lepor-is*, a hare.]

3 **Than to feed it.** Should be, "than *how* to feed it."

4 **Paddock,** a small park. [Old Eng. *pearroc*, a park, from *sparran*, to shut in with *spars*. *Park* is another form of the same word—a doublet.]

the two feminine appellatives, I must inform you that they were all males. Immediately commencing carpenter, I built them houses to sleep in; each had a separate apartment, so contrived that their ordure would pass through the bottom of it; an earthen pan placed under each received whatsoever fell, which being duly emptied and washed, they were thus kept perfectly sweet and clean. In the daytime they had the range of a hall, and at night retired each to his own bed, never intruding into that of another.

3. Puss grew presently familiar, would leap into my lap, raise himself upon his hinder feet, and bite the hair from my temples. He would suffer me to take him up, and to carry him about in my arms, and has more than once fallen fast asleep upon my knee. He was ill three days, during which time I nursed him, kept him apart from his fellows, that they might not molest him (for, like many other wild animals, they persecute one of their own species that is sick), and by constant care, and trying him with a variety of herbs, restored him to perfect health. No creature could be more grateful than my patient after his recovery; a sentiment[1] which he most significantly expressed by licking my hand, first the back of it, then the palm, then every finger separately, then between all the fingers, as if anxious to leave no part of it unsaluted; a ceremony[2] which he never performed but once again upon a similar occasion.

4. Finding him extremely tractable, I made it my custom to carry him always after breakfast into the garden, where he hid himself generally under the leaves of a cucumber vine, sleeping, or chewing the cud, till evening; in the leaves also of that vine he found a favourite repast. I had not long habituated him to this taste of liberty before he began to be impatient for the return of the time when he might enjoy it. He would invite me to the garden by drumming upon my knee, and by a look of such expression[3] as it was not possible to misinterpret. If this

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1 **A sentiment** — namely, the gratitude.

2 **A ceremony**—namely, the salutation.

3 **Of such expression**, so expressive.

rhetoric[1] did not immediately succeed, he would take the skirt of my coat between his teeth, and pull it with all his force. Thus Puss might be said to be perfectly tamed, the shyness of his nature was done away, and on the whole it was visible, by many symptoms which I have not room to enumerate, that he was happier in human society than when shut up with his natural companions.

5. Not so Tiney; upon him the kindest treatment had not the least effect. He too was sick, and in his sickness had an equal share of my attention; but if, after his recovery, I took the liberty to stroke him, he would grunt, strike with his fore feet, spring forward, and bite. He was, however, very entertaining in his way; even his surliness was matter of mirth, and in his play he preserved such an air of gravity, and performed his feats with such a solemnity of manner, that in him too I had an agreeable companion.

6. Bess, who died soon after he was full grown, and whose death was occasioned by his being turned into his box, which had been washed, while it was yet damp, was a hare of great humour and drollery. Puss was tamed by gentle usage; Tiney was not to be tamed at all; and Bess had a courage and confidence that made him tame from the beginning. I always admitted them into the parlour after supper, when, the carpet affording their feet a firm hold, they would frisk, and bound, and play a thousand gambols, in which Bess, being remarkably strong and fearless, was always superior to the rest, and proved himself the Vestris[2] of the party. One evening the cat, being in the room, had the hardiness to pat Bess upon the cheek, an indignity which he resented by drumming upon her back with such violence that the cat was happy to escape from under his paws, and hide herself.

7. I describe these animals as having each a character of his

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1 **Rhetoric**, form of speech—the literal meaning of the word.

2 **The Vestris.** Gaetano Vestris was a famous Italian dancer (1729–1808). He was very vain, and used to say, "Europe contains only three great men — myself, Voltaire, and Frederick of Prussia."

own. Such they were, in fact, and their countenances were so expressive of that character that, when I looked only on the face of either,[1] I immediately knew which it was. It is said that a shepherd, however numerous his flock, soon becomes so familiar with their features that he can, by that indication only, distinguish each from all the rest; and yet, to a common observer, the difference is hardly perceptible. I doubt not that the same discrimination in the cast of countenances would be discoverable in hares, and am persuaded that among a thousand of them no two could be found exactly similar—a circumstance little suspected by those who have not had opportunity to observe it.

8. These creatures have a singular sagacity in discovering the minutest alteration that is made in the place to which they are accustomed, and instantly apply their nose to the examination of a new object. A small hole being burnt[2] in the carpet, it was mended with a patch, and that patch in a moment underwent the strictest scrutiny. They seem, too, to be very much directed by the smell in the choice of their favourites; to some persons, though they saw them daily, they could never be reconciled, and would even scream when they attempted to touch them, but a miller coming in engaged their affections at once; his powdered coat had charms that were irresistible.

9. It is no wonder that my intimate acquaintance with these specimens of the kind has taught me to hold the sportsman's amusement in abhorrence. He little knows what amiable creatures he persecutes, of what gratitude they are capable, how cheerful they are in their spirits, what enjoyment they have of life, and that, impressed as they seem with a peculiar dread of man, it is only because man gives them peculiar cause for it.

10. That I may not be tedious, I will just give a short summary of those articles of diet that suit them best.

11. I take it to be a general opinion that they graze, but it is an erroneous one; at least grass is not their staple. They seem

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1 **Of either.** Should be, "of *one*." Either implies only two; but there were three hares.

2 **Being burnt.** Should be, "*having been* burnt."

rather to use it medicinally, soon quitting it for leaves of almost any kind. Sowthistle, dandelion, and lettuce are their favourite vegetables, especially the last. I discovered by accident that fine white sand is in great estimation with them—I suppose as a digestive. It happened that I was cleaning a bird-cage when the hares were with me. I placed a pot filled with such sand upon the floor, which, being at once directed to[1] by a strong instinct, they devoured voraciously. Since that time I have generally taken care to see them well supplied with it.

12. They account green corn a delicacy, both blade and stalk, but the ear they seldom eat. Straw of any kind, especially wheat-straw, is another of their dainties. They will feed greedily upon oats, but, if furnished with clean straw, never want them: it[2] serves them also for a bed, and, if shaken up daily, will be kept sweet and dry for a considerable time. They do not, indeed, require aromatic herbs,[3] but will eat a small quantity of them with great relish, and are particularly fond of the plant called musk.

13. They seem to resemble sheep in this, that, if their pasture be too succulent,[4] they are very subject to the rot; to prevent which I always made bread their principal nourishment, and, filling a pan with it, cut into small squares, placed it every evening in their chambers—for they feed only at evening and in the night.

14. During the winter, when vegetables were not to be got, I mingled this mess of bread with shreds of carrot, adding to it the rind of apples, cut extremely thin; for though they are fond of the paring, the apple itself disgusts them. These, however, not being a sufficient substitute for the juice of summer herbs, they must at this time be supplied with water; but so placed that they cannot overset it into their beds. I must not omit

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1 **Which being at once directed to.** The word *which* is here made to do duty both as object of "to" and as object of "devoured." It would be more correct to say "being directed to *it*."

2 **It** — namely, "clean straw." These words ought to have been repeated.

3 **Aromatic herbs**, herbs giving out *aroma* or sweet smell, such as musk.

4 **Succulent, juicy.**

that occasionally they are much pleased with twigs of hawthorn, and of the common brier, eating even the very wood when it is of considerable thickness.

15. Bess, I have said, died young. Tiney lived to be nine years old, and died at last, I have reason to think, of some hurt in his loins by a fall. Puss is still living, and has just completed his tenth year, discovering no signs of decay, nor even of age, except that he is grown more discreet and less frolicsome than he was. I cannot conclude without observing that I have lately introduced a dog to his acquaintance—a spaniel that had never seen a hare, to a hare that had never seen a spaniel. I did it with great caution, but there was no real need of it. Puss discovered no token of fear, nor Marquis the least symptom of hostility. There is, therefore, it should seem, no natural antipathy between dog and hare; but the pursuit of the one occasions the flight of the other, and the dog pursues because he is trained to it. They eat bread at the same time out of the same hand, and are in all respects sociable and friendly.

GEORGE GORDON—LORD BYRON.

1. In the year 1790, a lady arrived at Aberdeen from London, with her only son—a bright little fellow of two years of age. The husband and father, Captain John Byron of the Guards, had deserted them in London in a fit of dissipation, and had gone abroad, to be heard of no more. The wife was an Aberdeenshire heiress—Catherine Gordon of Gight. Most of her fortune had been squandered by her profligate husband; and she had now returned to the land of her own people to bring up her son—the future Lord Byron—on a reduced income of £130 a year.

2. George Gordon—Lord Byron—was born in Holles Street, London, on the 22nd of January 1788. He was therefore two years of age when his mother carried him off to the granite city. He received his first lessons in the grammar school of Aberdeen, and he grew up to be an active and mischievous boy, in spite of the lameness in one foot which had afflicted him from his birth.

3. When young Byron was in his eleventh year his grand-uncle died, and he became a lord and the owner of Newstead Abbey in Nottinghamshire. At once the joyous mother sold off her effects in Aberdeen and carried off her boy to the home of his ancestors. His lameness now distressed her more than anything else. In vain she tried quacks and doctors. The foot remained

GEORGE GORDON—LORD BYRON.

hopelessly distorted, and to the last a look at it wounded Byron like the stab of a dagger.

4. Less than two years at a Dulwich[1] boarding-school, and some time at Harrow, prepared the young lord for entering Trinity College, Cambridge, which he did in 1805. Already the youth of seventeen, thoroughly spoiled by his foolish mother, had been neglecting his regular studies, but had been eagerly devouring other books of every class and kind. Oriental history seems early to have fascinated his taste; and this first love gave its own colouring to his greatest poems.

5. Already, too, another love than that for books had been tinging his spirit with its hues. The lame but handsome boy was only fifteen when he met Mary Chaworth, whose coldness toward him was the first drop

1 **Dulwich**, a suburb of London, now included in the metropolis. It is in Surrey.

of that bitterness that poisoned his life. The beautiful *Dream*, one of the finest of his minor poems, tells the sad story of this boyish love and its results.

6. The young lord's life at Cambridge lasted about two years, during which he made some firm friends among the students, but greatly annoyed the college authorities by his irregular conduct. Among his freaks was that of keeping bull-dogs in his rooms. He also kept a bear cub, which he introduced to visitors as in training for a fellowship. His lameness did not prevent him from taking part in athletic sports. At school he had loved cricket better than the Latin poets. At college, he was passionately fond of boating, an exercise which he continued at Newstead, with a favourite Newfoundland dog as his constant companion.

7. During his leisure hours at school and at college he had been in the habit of penning occasional verses. These he collected and published at Newark in 1807 in a little volume called *Hours of Idleness*. Stung to the quick by a scornful article on the volume in the *Edinburgh Review*—generally attributed to Lord Brougham—the "noble minor" retorted in a satirical poem entitled *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, which showed that the abused versicles were but the languid recreations of a man in whose hand the pen could become a formidable and destructive weapon.

8. Two years of travel in Spain and Turkey (1809–1811) led the poet through those scenes the beauty and historic interest of which inspired the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. In spite of his own denials, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in his hero, Childe Harold, the disappointed and cynical misanthrope, Byron was painting his own portrait. Still smarting under his early love-sorrow, and conscious of

powers which the world had not recognized, his mind passed into that diseased state which made him take pride in hating all the world and in caring for nothing. As Byron was, so he pictures Childe Harold to have been.

9. When the first two cantos of this splendid poem were published in 1812, the author, who only five years before had been sneered at as a weakling, was raised by unanimous consent to the head of the English literary world. In his own words, "he awoke one morning, and found himself famous." As the rough Ayrshire peasant[1] had been caressed by the fashionables of Edinburgh, so was the aristocratic and handsome Byron idolized in the drawing-rooms of London.

10. Byron's life as a man of fashion and a literary lion lasted for about three years. During that time he took his seat in the House of Lords, and made three speeches there which did not produce any marked effect.

11. Still using the material gathered in his travels, the poet wrote those fine Turkish tales which kindled in the minds of Englishmen deep feelings of sympathy with modern Greece. *The Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos* appeared in 1813; *The Corsair* and *Lara* in the following year. Graphic and powerful as these poems are, the unwholesome Byronic hero—wasted, mysterious, sullen—casts his chill on us in all of them.

12. Byron's marriage with Miss Milbanke-Noel, daughter and heiress of Sir Ralph Milbanke of Durham, took place in 1815. Almost from the beginning there were disagreements, and in a twelvemonth the union was dissolved. One daughter, Ada, to whom are addressed the touching lines which open the third canto of *Childe Harold*, reminded the unhappy parents of what their home might have been.

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1 Ayrshire peasant, Robert Burns.

13. After writing *The Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina* amid the miseries of his last months in London, where he was publicly taunted with his ill-treatment of his wife, Byron left England in disgust in the spring of 1816, and never saw his native land again. During his remaining years, he wandered restlessly over Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Italy. At Venice, at Pisa, and at Rome, he led a wicked and irregular life. He wrote many poems, for which he received many thousand pounds. But as he sank morally, his style also became vitiated and morbid, and was too often poisoned with blasphemy and licentiousness.

14. *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, his greatest poem, was finished in 1818. The third canto was written at Geneva, the fourth and last chiefly at Venice. The view of modern Rome, the starlight vision of the bleeding gladiator, and the address to the ocean, which familiarity can never rob of its sublime effect, are the finest passages of the closing poem.

15. Byron's dramas were the least successful of his efforts. He did not possess sufficiently the power of going out of himself to make him a great dramatist. The best of his tragedies are *Cain* and *Manfred*, both of which are deeply marked with the poet's rebellious pride and misanthropy.

16. Byron's last literary effort was the composition of *Don Juan*—a dangerous work, from the skill with which the foulest thoughts are draped and garlanded with trappings of exceeding beauty and sweetness.

17. When the Greek War of Independence[1] broke out, Byron went to Greece to support with his presence the

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1 **Greek War of Independence**, an effort on the part of Greece to throw off the yoke of Turkey, to which it had been subject for three centuries. It lasted from 1821-1829, and ended in establishing the freedom of Greece.

cause which his earliest poems had sung. In 1823 he sailed from Leghorn to Cephalonia,[1] and passed thence to Missolonghi.[2] With money, with advice, with bodily service, he eagerly aided the cause of his adopted land. He did much to overcome the troubles arising from the wild lawlessness that prevailed in the Greek army. Suddenly fever seized him in its deadly gripe, and he died on the 19th of April 1824, aged only thirty-six years and three months. The body of the poet was carried to England, and was laid in the family vault at Hucknall, near Newstead.

18. *The Prisoner of Chillon; The Lament of Tasso; The Prophecy of Dante; Beppo*, a light tale of Venetian life; *Mazeppa;* and the terrible *Vision of Judgment*, written in mockery of a poem with the same title by Southey, with whom Byron had a deadly feud, complete the list of the poet's most important works.

SUMMARY OF BYRON'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year.	Age.	
1788		Born in London, January 22.
1790	2	His mother takes him to Aberdeen, his father having deserted them.
1796	8	Visits the Highlands with his mother.
1798	10	Death of his grand-uncle: becomes Lord Byron of Newstead Abbey.
1799	11	At school at Dulwich.
1800	12	At Harrow School.
1803	15	Vacation in Nottingham—Meets Mary Chaworth.
1805	17	At Trinity College, Cambridge.
1807	19	Publishes *Hours of Idleness.*
1808	20	Wild life in London.
1809	21	Publishes *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*—Travels in Portugal, Spain, Greece, and Turkey—Writes Canto I. of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

1 **Cephalonia**, the largest of the Ionian Islands.

2 **Missolonghi**, on the northern shore of the Gulf of Lepanto, near its mouth.

Year. Age.

1810...22...Writes Canto II. of *Childe Harold.*

1811...23...Returns to England—Death of his mother.

1812...24...Lionized in London—Publishes *Childe Harold*, Cantos I. and II.

1813...25...*The Giaour—The Bride of Abydos.*

1814...26...*The Corsair—Lara.*

1815...27...Marries Miss Anna Isabella Milbanke Noel—*Hebrew Melodies.*

1816...28...Marriage dissolved—Canto III. of *Childe Harold—Siege of Corinth —Parisina*—Leaves England—Visits Waterloo—Geneva—*Prisoner of Chillon.*

1817...29...*Manfred* (tragedy)—*The Lament of Tasso.*

1818...30...Goes to Venice—Canto IV. of *Childe Harold.*

1819...31...*Marino Faliero—The Prophecy of Dante—Sardanapalus—Mazeppa* —Cantos I. and II. of *Don Juan—Heaven and Earth.*

1820...32...Cantos III.-V. of *Don Juan—The Vision of Judgment—Beppo.*

1821...33...*The Two Foscari—Werner—The Deformed Transformed.*

1822...34...Goes to Pisa—*Cain*—Goes to Leghorn.

1823...35...Goes to Missolonghi.

1824...36...Cantos VI.-XVI. of *Don Juan*—Dies at Missolonghi, April 19.

SELECTIONS FROM BYRON.

GREECE.

[This famous passage is from Byron's Turkish tale, *The Giaour*[1] (*Jow'er*), written in 1813, when Greece was still subject to Turkey. It is a burst of indignant feeling, in which lamentation over the decay of Greece is mingled with reproaches addressed to the Greeks for the decline of their patriotism. The whole description is condensed into the simple line—

"'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more!"

The passage beginning with line 62, in which Greece is compared to a lovely corpse immediately after death, is exquisitely beautiful. Note the marvellous skill and tenderness with which the figure is elaborated. There is a well-known passage in *Childe Harold* in which the contrast between Ancient and Modern Greece is drawn with equal vigour and in the same spirit. It describes the country in its fallen state as "a nation's sepulchre."]

Fair clime! where every season smiles
Benignant[2] o'er those blessed isles,[3]
Which, seen from far Colonna's height,[4]
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And lend to loneliness delight.
There mildly dimpling, Ocean's cheek
Reflects the tints of many a peak
Caught by the laughing tides that lave
These Edens of the eastern wave.
And if at times a transient breeze
Break the blue crystal of the seas,
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
How welcome is each gentle air
That wakes and wafts the odours there!

1 **Giaour**—that is, Infidel; the name which Mohammedans apply to unbelievers.

2 **Benignant**, for benignantly.

3 **Those blessed isles**, the Cyclades, in the Archipelago.

4 **Colonna's height**, a lofty headland at the southmost point of Attica. Its ancient name was *Sunium*; and it was surmounted by a temple of Minerva, the columns of which still exist, and have given the cape its modern name, Colonna. Byron, in *Don Juan*, refers to it as "Sunium's marbled steep."

For there the Rose, o'er crag or vale,
Sultana[1] of the Nightingale,—
The maid for whom his melody,
His thousand songs are heard on high,—
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale:
His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
Unbent by winds, unchilled by snows,
Far from the winters of the west,
By every breeze and season blest,
Returns the sweets by Nature given
In softest incense back to heaven;
And grateful yields that smiling sky
Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
And many a summer flower is there,
And many a shade that love might share,
And many a grotto, meant for rest,
That holds the pirate[2] for a guest;
Whose bark in sheltering cove below
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
Till the gay mariner's guitar
Is heard, and seen the evening star;
Then stealing with the muffled oar,
Far shaded by the rocky shore,
Rush the night-prowlers[3] on the prey,
And turn to groans his roundelay.[4]
Strange—that where Nature loved to trace,
As if for gods, a dwelling-place,
And every charm and grace hath mixed
Within the paradise she fixed,
There man, enamoured of distress,
Should mar it into wilderness,

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1 **Sultana**, lady or bride.

2 **The pirate.** The coasts of Greece were at that time infested with pirates.

3 **Night-prowlers**, pirates who attack their prey under cover of the darkness.

4 **Roundelay**, a part-song; also called a "roundel,"—a song in which parts go *round*.

And trample, brute-like, o'er each
flower
That tasks not one laborious hour;[1]
Nor claims the culture of his hand
To bloom along the fairy land,
But springs as to preclude his care,
And sweetly woos him—but to spare!

He who hath bent him[2] o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),[3]
And marked[4] the mild, angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fixed yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And[5]—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
And but for that chill, changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy[6]
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these and these alone,

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1 **Tasks not one laborious hour,** needs not a single hour's work or care.

2 **He who hath bent him.** The verb to which this "he" is nominative is in line 71 —"He still might doubt," etc.; the lines between are one long and intricate parenthesis.

3 **The lines where beauty lingers,** the features of the recently dead.

4 **And marked,** "And *who hath* marked."

5 **And.** This "and" should have been followed by a third clause similar to the two that precede it; but the sentence is broken by the dash and is not resumed: "He who hath bent him...And *who hath* marked...And —."

6 **Cold Obstruction's apathy.** This phrase seems to have been a recollection of Shakespeare:—

"To die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot."
Measure for Measure, iii. 2.

Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,[1]
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;[2]
So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,
The first, last look[3] by death revealed!
Such is the aspect of this shore;[4]
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more![5]
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there.
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath;
But beauty[6] with that fearful bloom,
That hue which haunts it to the tomb,
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo[7] hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of Feeling passed away!
Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,
Which gleams, but warms no more its cherished earth![8]
Clime of the unforgotten brave![9]
Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave!
Shrine of the mighty! can it be
That this is all remains[10] of thee?

1 **Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour.** These are adverbial phrases of time, modifying "he might doubt." The hour is "treacherous" because it betrays the onlooker into the belief that the dead is only sleeping.

2 **The tyrant's power,** the power of death.

3 **The first, last look.** In a note on this passage, Byron speaks of "that singular beauty which pervades, with few exceptions, the features of the dead for a few hours, and but for a few hours, after 'the spirit is not there.'"

4 **This shore,** for this country,—a part for the whole: *synecdoche*.

5 **Living Greece no more.** At the time referred to in the poem, Greece was entirely subject to the Turks, as it had been for nearly three centuries, during which everything like national life had been well-nigh trodden out.

6 **But beauty.** "But *hers is* beauty." The conjunction "but" always implies contrast, but there is no contrast here. The "loveliness in death" and the "beauty with that fearful bloom" are really the same thing. "Hue," "ray," "halo," "beam," and "spark" are in apposition with "bloom" (line 80).

7 **A gilded halo.** Observe that this and the three following lines consist of ten syllables each. The other lines have only eight.

8 **Cherished earth,** the human body, cherished or loved by the soul.

9 **Clime of the unforgotten brave.** Greece is addressed in these words.

10 **All remains,** "all *that* remains."

Approach, thou craven, crouching slave:
Say, is not this Thermopylæ?[1]
These waters[2] blue that round you lave,—
O servile offspring of the free,
Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis![3]
These scenes,[4] their story not unknown,[5]
Arise, and make again your own;
Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires;
And he who in the strife expires
Will add to theirs a name of fear
That tyranny shall quake to hear,
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
They too[6] will rather die than shame:
For Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeathed by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won.
Bear[7] witness, Greece, thy living page!
Attest[8] it many a deathless age!
While kings, in dusty darkness hid,
Have left a nameless pyramid,[9]
Thy heroes, though the general doom
Hath swept the column from their tomb,

1 **Thermopylæ**, the famous pass in Thessaly where Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans bravely fell before the advancing hosts of Xerxes, the Persian king, 480 B.C.

2 **These waters.** Agreeing with "what sea" in line 96.

3 **Salamis**, an island (mod. *Koluri*) in the Saronic Gulf (the sea of Ægina, or Athens), between which and the mainland of Attica the Persian fleet was defeated by Themistocles, 480 B.C.

4 **These scenes.** Governed by "make" in next line.

5 **Their story not unknown,** "not *being* unknown;" an absolute phrase, equivalent to "whose story is not unknown."

6 **They too,** "*which* they too."

7 **Bear.** An example of the third person singular of the imperative mood. Its nominative is "page."

8 **Attest.** Another example of the third person singular imperative. Its nominative is "age."

9 **A nameless pyramid.** Referring to the monuments erected to the memory of Egyptian kings, and the impossibility of discovering in most cases the king to whom each was erected.

A mightier monument command,—
The mountains[1] of their native land!
There points[2] thy Muse to stranger's eye
The graves of those that cannot die!
'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
Each step from splendour to disgrace;
Enough—no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul, till from itself it fell;[3]
Yes! Self-abasement paved the way
To villain-bonds and despot sway.
What can he tell who treads thy shore?
No legend of thine olden time,
No theme on which the Muse might soar
High as thine own in days of yore,
When man was worthy of thy clime.
The hearts within thy valleys bred,
The fiery souls that might have led
Thy sons to deeds sublime,
Now crawl from cradle to the grave,
Slaves—nay, the bondsmen of a slave,[4]
And callous, save to crime;
Stained with each evil that pollutes
Mankind, where least above the brutes:
Without even savage virtue blest,
Without one free or valiant breast,
Still to the neighbouring ports they waft
Proverbial wiles[5] and ancient craft;
In this the subtle Greek is found,—
For this, and this alone, renowned.

1 **Mountains.** Agreeing with "monument."

2 **There points, etc.** "Thy Muse directs the stranger's eye to the graves of those," etc.

3 **From itself it fell.** Refers to the internal dissensions and civil wars which so weakened Greece that, in the second century B.C., she fell an easy prey to Rome.

4 **The bondsmen of a slave.** The governor of Athens, at the time when Byron wrote, was himself under the control of the master of the Sultan's seraglio.

5 **Proverbial wiles.** Referring to the bad name which the modern Greeks had acquired in Byron's time for cunning and duplicity.

NIGHT IN ROME.

[This description of Rome by moonlight is from the tragedy of *Manfred*. Its most striking feature is the picture of the Coliseum, and the contrast of its "ruinous perfection" with the "indistinct decay" of the other buildings of Ancient Rome.]

The stars are forth, the moon[1] above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the Night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learned the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering,—upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's[2] wall,
'Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watch-dog bayed beyond the Tiber; and
More near from out the Cæsars' palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appeared to skirt the horizon,[3] yet they stood
Within a bowshot. Where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levelled battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;

---

1 **The moon.** Supply *is forth*.

2 **Coliseum,** a magnificent ruin, in Rome, of an amphitheatre, elliptical in shape. It was erected by the Emperors Vespasian and Titus between 75 and 80 A.D., and is supposed to have held eighty thousand spectators at one time.

3 **Appeared to skirt the horizon.** Owing to the deceptive character of moonlight as regards the distance of objects.

But the gladiator's bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection,
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,[1]
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.[2]
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon,[3] upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which softened down the hoar austerity[4]
Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
As 'twere anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making[5] that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old.—
The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.

MY NATIVE LAND—GOOD NIGHT.

[This song occurs near the opening of *Childe Harold*. It may be taken to express the feelings with which Byron quitted England in 1809—he caring for no one, and no one apparently caring for him. His own mood is brought out by contrasting with it that of the little page weeping at parting with his mother, and the stanch yeoman sorrowing for his wife and boys. Unlike them, Byron is glad to get away from England, singing as he goes,—

"Why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me?"]

1. Adieu, adieu! my native shore
Fades o'er the waters blue;
The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.[6]

---

1 **Augustan halls**, the palaces of the emperors, each of whom bore the title Augustus.

2 **Indistinct decay**, a contrast with the "ruinous perfection" of the Coliseum.

3 **Moon.** Vocative case, or nominative of address.

4 **Hoar austerity**, the harshness of age; but age is generally spoken of as mellow.

5 **Making**, "making *beautiful*."

6 **Sea-mew**, a kind of gull.

Yon sun that sets upon the sea
We follow in his flight;
Farewell awhile to him and thee,
My Native Land—Good Night!

2. A few short hours and he will rise
To give the morrow birth;
And I shall hail the main[1] and skies,
But not my mother earth.
Deserted is my own good hall,
Its hearth is desolate;
Wild weeds are gathering on the wall;
My dog howls at the gate.[2]

3. "Come hither, hither, my little page;
Why dost thou weep and wail?
Or dost thou dread the billows' rage,
Or tremble at the gale?
But dash the tear-drop from thine eye;
Our ship is swift and strong:
Our fleetest falcon scarce can fly
More merrily along."—

4. "Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high,
I fear not wave nor wind:
Yet marvel not, Sir Childe,[3] that I
Am sorrowful in mind;
For I have from my father gone,
A mother whom I love,
And have no friend, save these alone,
But thee—and One above.

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1 **The main**, the ocean; the main or great sea.

2 **Deserted....gate**, a graphic picture of a deserted mansion.

3 **Sir Childe**, Childe Harold. Stanza three is addressed by Childe Harold to the page. The reply of the page begins in stanza four.

5. "My father blessed me fervently,
Yet did not much complain;
But sorely will my mother sigh
Till I come back again."—
"Enough, enough, my little lad!
Such tears become thine eye;
If I thy guileless bosom had,
Mine own[1] would not be dry.—

6. "Come hither, hither, my stanch yeoman;
Why dost thou look so pale?
Or dost thou dread a French foeman,
Or shiver at the gale?"—
"Deem'st thou[2] I tremble for my life?
Sir Childe, I'm not so weak;
But thinking on an absent wife
Will blanch a faithful cheek.

7. "My spouse and boys dwell near thy hall,
Along the bordering lake,
And when they on their father call,
What answer shall she make?"—
"Enough, enough, my yeoman good,
Thy grief let none gainsay;[3]
But I, who am of lighter mood,
Will laugh to flee away."

8. And now I'm in the world alone,
Upon the wide, wide sea:
But why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me?
Perchance my dog will whine in vain,
Till fed by stranger hands;

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1 **Mine own**, my own eye.
2 **Deem'st thou**. Here begins the yeoman's reply.
3 **Gainsay**, properly deny or dispute; but here in the sense of condemn.

But long ere I come back again
He'd tear me where he stands.

9. With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go
Athwart the foaming brine;
Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,
So not again to mine.
Welcome, welcome, ye dark-blue waves!
And when you fail my sight,
Welcome, ye deserts and ye caves!
My Native Land—Good Night!

THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS.

[This short poem is a fine example of Byron's lyrical power and grace. The third line strikes the key-note of the song—"music on the waters." Probably the whole of the imagery was suggested by what the poet had seen and felt. There are two sets of ideas in the poem;—the real effect of the human voice on the spirit of man, causing him to listen and adore; and the fancied effect of music on the ocean, charming it into calm, and lulling the winds, so that its bosom heaves gently like that of a sleeping infant. The interweaving of these two sets of ideas is poetry.]

There be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;[1]
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound[2] were causing
The charmëd[3] ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lulled winds seem dreaming:

---

1 **Like thee**, should be "like *thine;*" but Byron often sacrificed grammar to effect. That is "poetical license."

2 **Its sound**—that is, music's sound. Construe thus:—"When the waves lie still and gleaming, and the lulled winds seem dreaming, as if music's sound were causing the pausing of the charmed ocean."

3 **Charmëd**, enchanted; spell-bound.

And the midnight moon[1] is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:[2]
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

MAID OF ATHENS.

Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.

[This is another of Byron's love lyrics. It was written while he was in Greece in 1810 and 1811.]

Maid of Athens![3] ere we part,
Give, oh give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest![4]
Hear my vow before I go,
Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ.[5]

By those tresses[6] unconfined,
Wooed by each Ægean wind;[7]
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;

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1 **And the midnight moon, etc.**, "And *when* the midnight moon;" connecting this clause with line 5.

2 **As an infant's asleep.** This line halts. The rhythm requires the accent to be thrown on the weak word "an." If that be not done, the line is prose.

3 **Maid of Athens.** The vocative case, or nominative of address.

4 **Take the rest**, accept of me altogether.

5 **The Greek words**, *Zoe mou, sas agapo*, mean, "My life, I love thee!"

6 **By those tresses.** This is the first of a series of adjurations, continued through this and the next stanza: "I swear that I love thee, by those tresses, those lids, those eyes, that lip," etc.

7 **Ægean wind**, the wind of the Ægean Sea, east of Greece, separating it from Asia Minor. The gulf near which Athens stands is that of Ægina. The two names are often confounded.

By those wild eyes like the roe,[1]
Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ. 12

By that lip I long to taste;[2]
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all[3] the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ. 18

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet![4] when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,[5]
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζώη μοῦ, σᾶς ἀγαπῶ. 24

THERE'S NOT A JOY.

[These verses breathe a spirit of despondency, of disappointment, almost of despair, which was characteristic of Byron at a certain period in his unhappy career. The feelings it expresses are those of a man who has drained the cup of pleasure to its dregs, and has found it to be vanity and vexation of spirit. The future, too, is dark and hopeless. Nothing is seen but "the withered waste of life."]

There's not a joy[6] the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not[7] on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast, 3
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

1 **Like the roe,** "like *those of* the roe," or like the roe's: another example of poetical [license.

2 **To taste,** to kiss.

3 **By all.** In this and the two following lines the accent is shifted from the first to the second syllable.

4 **Sweet,** sweet-heart: the vocative case.

5 **Istambol.** The Turkish name for Constantinople; corrupted into *Stamboul.*

6 **There's not a joy, etc.** A very condensed line. Its grammatical structure may be thus shown: "There is not a joy that the world can give that is like (equal to) that which the world takes away."

7 **'Tis not...alone, etc.** Construe thus: "It is not only the blush on youth's smooth cheek that fades so fast, but the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself is past." The contrast is between the blush on the cheek and the bloom of the heart.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points[1] in vain
The shore to which their shivered sail[2] shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own:
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined turret wreathe,[3]
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and gray beneath.

Oh, could I feel as I have felt, or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept o'er many a vanished scene;
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though they be,
So, 'midst the withered waste of life, those tears would flow to me.[4]

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1 **Points**, for "points *out*," or "points *to*."
2 **Sail**, here used for a ship. The figure of speech which puts a part for the whole is called *synecdoche*.
3 **Wreathe**, twine; encircle.
4 **To me**, in my case.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

1. In a small house at the head of College Wynd in Edinburgh, near the University, Walter Scott was born, on August 15, 1771. His father, also Walter Scott, was a lawyer—a "Writer to the Signet;" his mother, Anne Rutherford, was the daughter of an eminent Edinburgh physician and professor. He belonged to a famous Border family, the Scotts of Harden, near Hawick, who were noted rievers[1] as well as brave soldiers in fair fight.

2. William Scott of Harden was once taken prisoner when leading a raid on the lands of Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank.[2] He obtained his life and his freedom on promising to marry his captor's youngest daughter, who was extremely ugly, and was known as "Mickle-mou'd Meg." She made him an excellent wife. It is told of her that when her larder was empty she used to put on the dinner table a dish which, when uncovered, was found to contain nothing but a pair of spurs—a hint to her husband and his men that it was time for them to ride forth in quest of cattle. Of this couple Walter Scott was proud of being a descendant.

3. When Scott was only eighteen months old, a teething-fever deprived him of the power of his right leg, and caused the lameness which affected him through

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1 **Rievers,** freebooters; robbers.

2 **Elibank,** on the right bank of the Tweed; between Innerleithen and Clovenfords.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

his life. To help his recovery he was sent to the house of his grandfather, Robert Scott of Sandy-Knowe, near Dryburgh. There many of the happiest days of his childhood were spent, in gazing up at Sandy-Knowe tower as he lay on the grass among the sheep, or in looking down on the gray ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, which was to be his resting-place, or in watching the windings of the silver Tweed and the bold front of "Eildon's triple height."[1] Thus early began that love for the Tweed to which he was constant till his dying day, when he drew his last breath within the sound of its "gentle ripple."

4. At the High School of Edinburgh, where he spent some years, he did nothing remarkable in the class-

1 **Eildon's triple height.** The Eildon Hills, near Melrose; said to have been cloven into three peaks by the wizard, Michael Scott.

rooms save some clever poetical versions from Horace[1] and Virgil,[2] which won for him the attention of Dr. Adam,[3] the rector. But in the play-ground he was very popular on account of his great powers as a story-teller.

5. From his earliest years he was passionately fond of reading. He tells us how he found some odd volumes of Shakespeare in his mother's dressing-room, where he sometimes slept, and with what delight he sat in his shirt reading them by the light of the fire, until he heard the noise of the family rising from the supper-table. Spenser[4] and Ossian[5] were also among his early favourites.

6. After spending two years at the University of Edinburgh, Scott was apprenticed to his father, and he remained in his office till 1792, when he was called to the bar at the age of twenty-one. Though he donned the wig and gown of a Scottish advocate, Scott always found the attractions of literature more powerful than those of law; and very thankful he was when his appointment, in 1799, as Sheriff of Selkirkshire gave him a fixed salary of £300 a year, and abundance of leisure to devote to his favourite pursuits.

7. His literary career had opened some years before that with his translations from the German of Bürger's[6] *Lenore* and *Wild Huntsman*. In 1797, he married Charlotte Margaret Charpentier, or Carpenter, a French lady. When he got his sheriffship, he settled down to

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1 **Horace**, Latin lyrical and satirical poet (65-8 B.C.).

2 **Virgil**, Latin epic poet; author of the *Æneid* (70-19 B.C.).

3 **Dr. Adam**, Alexander Adam, rector of the High School of Edinburgh (1768-1809); author of *Roman Antiquities*. (1741-1809.)

4 **Spenser, Edmund**, English poet; author of the *Faerie Queene*. (1553-1599 A.D.)

5 **Ossian**, ancient Gaelic bard, supposed to have flourished in the third century. James Macpherson published a translation of his poems in 1760, but the genuineness of the originals has been much questioned.

6 **Bürger**, Gottfried, German poet (1748-1794).

regular literary work, his first important labour being the collection of ballads published in 1802–3, with the title, *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border.*

8. Soon afterwards he took up his abode at Ashestiel,[1] a country house on the Tweed, where he continued to reside for the greater part of eight years. The house stands on a high and wooded bank overlooking the river which he loved so well.

9. His mode of life at Ashestiel may serve as a specimen of the routine he followed to the last, while he was in the country. He rose at five o'clock, and if the weather was cold he lit his own fire. Having paid a visit to the stable, to see his horse and his dogs, he returned to his study and sat down at his desk in his shooting-jacket about six, with a dog or two at his feet. He wrote steadily till breakfast time (nine or ten); and by that hour he had, in his own words, "broken the neck of the day's work." A couple of hours after breakfast were also given to the pen; and at twelve o'clock he was "his own man"—free for the day. His official duties, varied with riding and walking, coursing and fishing, filled up the rest of his time.

10. The publication of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, finished at Ashestiel in 1805, at once raised Scott to a high place among British poets. This tale was but the first of a series of picturesque romances couched in flowing verse, and coloured with the brightest hues of Highland and knightly life, that flowed from his magic pen during the next ten years. The popularity of these enchanting poems—*Marmion*, *The Lady of the Lake*, and *The Lord of the Isles*—was extraordinary. They made the scenery of Scotland famous all over the world.

11. In 1806, he was appointed one of the clerks of

1 **Ashestiel,** on the right bank of the Tweed; a mile above Clovenfords.

the Court of Session, which gave him the prospect, on the death of his colleague, of an income of £800 a year. With his rising fame and growing wealth the dream of becoming a Border laird began to take a definite shape. In 1811 he bought the farm of Cartley-Hole, stretching for half a mile along the south bank of the Tweed, not far from the foot of the Gala.

12. That ill-named and not very well-favoured spot formed the nucleus of Abbotsford. One piece of neighbouring land after another was added. The bare banks of Tweed were clothed with plantations of young wood. By-and-by a mansion was built beside the river—"a Gothic romance embodied in stone and mortar," as it has been called—and the fair dream of the poet's life seemed to be fast shaping itself into a reality.

13. One day in the autumn of 1813, when Scott was searching for some fishing-tackle in his cabinet, he came upon some sheets of manuscript. He had almost forgotten their existence. As he turned them over he remembered that they were the sheets of a prose romance he had begun to write eight years before, but had never finished.

14. They were in fact the first sheets of *Waverley*—the beginning of the marvellous series of romances and tales which have given him a place among the very greatest masters of fiction. *Waverley* had been abandoned in 1805 in favour of more solid work—*The Life and Works of Dryden* (1808). That was followed by *The Life and Works of Swift* (1814), on which Scott was engaged when he found the forgotten manuscript. Now *Swift* was laid aside that *Waverley* might be completed.

15. The greater part of the first volume was written during the ensuing Christmas vacation; and "the evenings of three summer weeks" served to complete the remaining two.

16. On one of these summer evenings, a gay party of young men were sitting over their wine in a house in George Street, Edinburgh, when the host drew attention to a window of a Castle Street house at which a solitary hand was seen working without stay or weariness at a desk, and throwing down page after page of manuscript on a rising heap. "It is the same every night," said young Menzies; "I can't stand the sight of it when I am not at my books. Still it goes on unwearied; and so it will be till candles are brought in, and nobody knows how long after that!"

17. The hand was the hand of Walter Scott, writing the last volume of *Waverley*, seen as he sat in a back room of that house in North Castle Street—No. 39—which was long his Edinburgh residence.

18. When the work was finished, the manuscript was copied by John Ballantyne, the printer, in whose business Scott had been a partner for several years; and then *Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, was given to the world, but without the author's name. The success of the book was immediate and remarkable. "Who wrote the nameless book?" became the great literary question of the day.

19. When from the same hidden hand there came in quick succession a whole series of novels, brilliant and enchanting as no novels had been before, the marvel grew greater still. Most carefully was the secret kept. A copy of the manuscript was always made by one of the Ballantynes, and that copy was put into the printers' hands. For a long time Scott was not suspected, owing to the mass of other literary work which passed through his hands; but in Edinburgh at least, long before his public confession at the Theatrical Fund Dinner in 1827, the authorship of the "Waverley Novels" was no mystery.

20. Elated by success, and feeling like a man who had come suddenly on a rich and unwrought mine of gold, Scott gave the rein to his ambition. On the decoration of Abbotsford, on his armoury, his woodlands, his gardens, his furniture, his paintings, he spent thousands of pounds. To meet the expenses of such costly doings, and of the free hospitality to which his generous nature prompted him, he coined his fertile brain into vast sums of money—the proceeds of his magical works.

21. Unfortunately, much of this money was spent before it was earned. The ruinous system of receiving bills from his publishers as payment for work not yet done, once entered on could not be abandoned. Author and publishers, alike intoxicated by success, became too giddy and reckless to look far into the future. Yet that future was surely coming with swift and awful pace.

22. In 1825 there occurred a money panic which involved hundreds in ruin. Among the first to go down were Messrs. Hurst and Robinson, the London agents of Constable and Company, Scott's publishers. Then followed Constable and Company; and with them fell, in 1826, Ballantyne and Company, the printers, in whose business Scott was a partner.

23. The result was, that the author of the "Waverley Novels" stood at the age of fifty-five, not only penniless, but burdened, as a partner in the Ballantyne concern, with a debt of £117,000. The calamity brought out the noblest qualities of Scott's nature. Refusing to allow his creditors to suffer any loss that he could prevent, he devoted his life and his pen to the herculean task of removing this mountain—debt.

24. Already his strong frame had been shaken by illness; the hair that fringed his towering forehead had become snow-white, and the first symptoms of apoplexy

had appeared. Yet the valiant soul was never shaken. Amid the gloom of his commercial distresses—under the deeper sorrow of his wife's death which clouded the following year—he worked on steadily and bravely, producing every day enough of manuscript to fill thirty pages of print.

25. Before the crash came, he had begun to write a *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*. With this he now persevered, though it was a much more laborious kind of work, from the amount of research it involved, than that to which he had been accustomed. The Life of Napoleon was published in nine volumes in 1827—the year after the failure.

26. *Woodstock* was the first novel he wrote after his great misfortune; and its sale for £8,228—it was the work of only three months—encouraged the brave man to hope that a few years would suffice to enable him to clear off his gigantic debt. Essays, reviews, histories, letters, and tales poured from the unresting pen as fast as they had ever done in its strongest days. His delightful *Tales of a Grandfather*, narrating with picturesque colouring the history of Scotland, were among the works of his declining years. *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous*, both published in 1831, were the last of his published works. He also undertook in those last years what he called his *opus magnum*[1]—a reissue of his novels with introductions and notes.

27. But the toil was killing him. There came a day—February 15, 1830—when he fell speechless in his drawing-room under a stroke of paralysis. From that time he never was the same man. A visit to Italy in the autumn of 1831 revived him somewhat; and at Naples he attempted some literary work. On his way

1 Opus magnum, great work.

home, by way of the Rhine, the relentless malady struck him a mortal blow.

28. His earnest wish was to die at Abbotsford, within sight and sound of the Tweed; and there he soon found himself, with his grandchildren and his dogs playing around the chair he could not leave.

29. Perhaps the saddest scene of all this sad time—sadder even than that of the family kneeling around the dying bed—was the last effort of the author to return to his old occupation. On the 17th of July 1832, awaking from sleep, he desired his writing materials to be prepared. When the chair in which he lay propped up with pillows was moved into his study and placed before his desk, his daughter put a pen into his hand; but, alas! there was no power in the fingers to close on the familiar weapon. It dropped on the paper, and the helpless old man sank back to weep in silence.

30. Little more than two months later—on the 21st of September—this great man died, as he had wished to die, at Abbotsford, "the gentle ripple of Tweed over its pebbles" sounding in his ears. On the fifth day thereafter, his body was laid beside the dust of his wife within Dryburgh Abbey, whose gray walls he had often seen among the yews from his grassy seat on the crags of Sandy-Knowe.

SUMMARY OF SCOTT'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year. Age.

1771.....Born at Edinburgh, August 15.
1773... 2...Lives with his grandfather at Sandy-Knowe.
1779... 8...Goes to Edinburgh High School.
1782...11...Writes poem on *The Setting Sun.*
1784...13...Goes to Edinburgh University.
1785...14...Apprenticed to his father.
1792...21...Called to the bar.
1796...25...*Translations of Bürger's Lenore* and *The Wild Huntsman.*
1797...26...Marries Charlotte Margaret Charpentier.
1799...28...Sheriff-Substitute of Selkirkshire.

Year. Age.

1802...31...*The Border Minstrelsy*, I., II.

1803...32...*The Border Minstrelsy*, III.

1804...33...Goes to live at Ashestiel; visited by Wordsworth.

1805...34...*The Lay of the Last Minstrel;* visits Wordsworth at the Lakes.

1806...35...Appointed a clerk in the Court of Session.

1808...37...*Marmion—Life and Works of Dryden.*

1810...39...Joins the firm of John Ballantyne & Co., printers—*The Lady of the Lake.*

1811...40...Purchases Abbotsford—*The Vision of Don Roderick.*

1812...41...*Rokeby.*

1813...42...Declines the Laureateship (which Southey accepts).

1814...43...*Waverley* published—*Life and Works of Swift*—Voyage to Orkney, Shetland, and the Hebrides.

1815...44...*The Lord of the Isles—Guy Mannering*—Visits London and Paris—*The Field of Waterloo.*

1816...45...*The Antiquary—The Black Dwarf—Old Mortality.*

1817...46...*Harold the Dauntless—Rob Roy.*

1818...47...*The Heart of Midlothian*—Severe illness—*The Bride of Lammermoor—The Legend of Montrose.*

1819...48...*Ivanhoe.*

1820...49...*The Monastery*—Made a baronet—*The Abbot.*

1821...50...*Kenilworth—The Pirate*—Byron dedicates *Cain* to him.

1822...51...*The Fortunes of Nigel—Halidon Hill*, a drama—Receives George IV. at Leith.

1823...52...*Peveril of the Peak—Quentin Durward—St. Ronan's Well.*

1824...53...*Redgauntlet—The Betrothed—The Talisman*—Visits Ireland.

1825...54...*Life of Buonaparte*, for "Constable's Miscellany."

1826...55...Failure of Ballantyne & Co.—*Letters of Malachi Malagrowther—Woodstock.*

1827...56...Death of Lady Scott—Visits London and Paris—Acknowledges the authorship of the "Waverley Novels"—*Life of Buonaparte—Chronicles of the Canongate—Tales of a Grandfather*, first series.

1828...57...*The Fair Maid of Perth—Tales of a Grandfather*, second series—Visits London.

1829...58...*Anne of Geierstein—Tales of a Grandfather*, third series—Successful reissue of the novels.

1830...59...*The Doom of Devorgoil—The Ayrshire Tragedy*—Attack of apoplexy and recovery—*Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*—Resigns clerkship of the Court of Session—His creditors present him with the furniture, library, &c., at Abbotsford.

1831...60...Stroke of paralysis—*Count Robert of Paris—Castle Dangerous*—Visits Malta and Naples.

1832...61...Goes to Rome, Venice, Frankfort, Nimwegen—Another paralytic attack—Returns to Abbotsford, July 11—Dies there September 21st—Buried in Dryburgh Abbey.

SELECTIONS FROM SCOTT.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

(The prose abstract is from Lord Jeffrey's Essays.)

[*The Lady of the Lake* was published in May 1810, and 20,000 copies of it were sold before the end of the year. Mr. Cadell, Scott's publisher, says, "The whole country rang with the praises of the poet—crowds set off to view the scenery of Loch Katrine, till then comparatively unknown." Scott made the Trossachs and Loch Katrine famous all over the world; and by attracting visitors to the scenes he described so graphically, he increased the fame and the prosperity of Scotland.]

CANTO I.—THE CHASE.

1. The first canto begins with a description of a stag-hunt in the Highlands of Perthshire:—

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill;[1]
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's[2] hazel shade:
But when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's[3] head,
The deep-mouthed blood-hound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way;
And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.—
As Chief, who hears his warder call,
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"
The antlered monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But, ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;

1 **Monan's rill,** a stream somewhere in Strathearn—either the Earn or one of its tributaries.

2 **Glenartney,** a valley south of and parallel to Strathearn, watered by the Artney or Ruchill stream.

3 **Benvoirlich,** a mountain on the south side of Loch Earn, 3,180 feet high.

Like crested leader proud and high,
Tossed his beamed frontlet[1] to the sky;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuffed the tainted gale,
A moment listened to the cry,
That thickened as the chase drew nigh;
Then, as the headmost foes appeared,
With one brave bound the copse he cleared,
And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.[2]

2. As the chase lengthens, the sportsmen drop off, till at last the foremost huntsman is left alone; and his horse, overcome with fatigue, stumbles and dies in a rocky valley. The adventurer pursues a little wild path through a deep ravine.

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far-projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnished sheet of living gold,
Loch Katrine[3] lay beneath him rolled;
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light;
And mountains[4] that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.

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1 **Beamed frontlet**, forehead with full-grown antlers. *Beamed* is applied to a stag's head when all its antlers are put forth.

2 **Uam-Var**, a mountain north-east of Callander.

3 **Loch Katrine**, "the lake" referred to in the title of the poem.

4 **Mountains.** Benvenue overlooks the Trossachs on the south, and Ben-an on the north. Hence they are described as sentinels guarding the enchanted land.

High on the south, huge Benvenue
Down to the lake in masses threw
Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,—
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feathered o'er
His ruined sides and summit hoar;
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare. 50

3. After gazing with admiration on this beautiful scene, which is described with greater spirit than accuracy, the huntsman winds his horn in the hope of being heard by some of his attendants; and sees, to his infinite surprise, a little skiff, guided by a lovely woman, glide from beneath the trees that overhang the water, and approach the shore at his feet. The lady calls to her father, and, upon the stranger's approach, pushes her shallop from the shore in alarm. After holding a short parley with him, however, from the water, she takes him into the boat, and carries him to a wooded island, where she leads him into a sort of silvan mansion rudely constructed of trunks of trees, moss, and thatch, and hung round within with trophies of war and of the chase. An elderly lady is introduced at supper; and the stranger, after disclosing himself to be "James Fitz-James, the Knight of Snowdoun," tries in vain to discover the name and history of the ladies, whose manners discover[1] them to be of high rank and quality. He then retires to sleep, and is disturbed with distressful visions; rises and tranquillizes himself by looking out on the lovely moonlight landscape; and then

His midnight orisons[2] he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consigned to Heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturbed repose;

---

1 **Discover .. discover.** Lord Jeffrey here commits the fault of tautology in using the same word twice in this sentence, though in different senses. *Show* might have been used for the second "discover."

2 **Orisons,** prayers.

Until the heath-cock[1] shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue.

CANTO II.—THE ISLAND.

4. The second canto opens with a fine picture of the aged harper, Allan-bane, sitting on the island beach with the damsel, watching the skiff which carries the stranger back again to land. The minstrel sings a sweet song; and a conversation ensues, from which the reader gathers that the lady is a daughter of the house of Douglas, and that her father,[2] having been exiled by royal displeasure from the court, had been fain to accept of this asylum from Sir Roderick Dhu, a Highland chieftain, who had long been outlawed for deeds of blood, but still maintained his feudal sovereignty in the fastnesses of his native mountains. It appears also that this dark chief is in love with his fair *protégée;* but that her affections are engaged to Malcolm Græme, a younger and more amiable mountaineer, the companion and guide of her father in his hunting excursions.

5. As they are engaged in this discourse, the sound of distant music is heard on the lake, and Allan-bane exclaims:—

"But hark! what sounds are these?
My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
No weeping birch, nor aspens[3] wake,
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
Still is the canna's[4] hoary beard,
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar."—

---

1 **Heath-cock**, grouse or moor-fowl.

2 **Her father.** This Douglas, called in the poem "Lord James," is a fictitious character; but he has his prototype in Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie, uncle of the Earl of Douglas who was banished by James V. in 1528.

3 **Aspen**, the poplar tree.

4 **Canna**, the cotton-grass.

Far up the lengthened lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four manned and masted barges grew;
And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,[1]
Steered full upon the lonely isle:
The point of Brianchoil[2] they passed,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's bannered Pine!
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave;
Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow
From their loud chanters[3] down, and sweep
The furrowed bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,[4]
They plied the ancient Highland strain.
Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch[5] proud.
At first the sound, by distance tame,
Mellowed along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wailed every harsher note away;
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill Gathering[6] they could hear,—

1 **Glengyle**, at the western end of Loch Katrine—a home of the Macgregors.
2 **Brianchoil**, on the south side of the lake.
3 **Chanters**, the bag-pipes; properly the flute-like tube on which the tune is played.
4 **Amain**, with force.
5 **Pibroch**, a Highland martial air.
6 **Gathering**, war-cry; *slogan*.

Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine[1] to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
And, hurrying at the signal dread,
The battered earth returns their tread.
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Expressed their merry marching on.
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;
And mimic din[2] of stroke and ward,
As broadsword upon target jarred;
And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condensed, the battle yelled amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow,
Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
And changed the conquering clarion-swell
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

The war-pipes ceased, but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still:
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise.
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burden bore,[3]

1 **Clan-Alpine**, the Macgregors.

2 **Mimic din**, the din of battle imitated on the bag-pipe. This description of a battle-scene represented in pipe music is very powerful.

3 **With measured sweep the burden bore.** Made his singing and his rowing keep time. Thus Moore in the *Canadian Boat Song*:—

"Our *voices* keep tune and our *oars* keep time."

"Burden" is the chorus or refrain.

In such wild cadence as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine, ho! iro!"
And near and nearer as they rowed,
Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

Boat Song.

Hail to the Chief who in triumph advances!
Honoured and blessed be the ever-green Pine![1]
Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gaily to bourgeon,[2] and broadly to grow;
While every Highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu,[3] ho! ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane,[4] in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;[5]
Menteith and Breadalbane,[6] then,
Echo his praise agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

1 **Ever-green Pine,** the emblem of Roderick. (See line 74.)

2 **Bourgeon** (*boor'jon*), bud; send forth [shoots.

3 **Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu.** *Vich,* son of; *dhu,* black: Black Roderick, the son of Alpine.

4 **Beltane,** Whitsuntide. The word means Baal-fire,—fire offered to Baal, the sun-god.

5 **Firmer he roots him,** etc. Compare what Cowper says of the oak:—
"More fixed below, the more disturbed above."
See p. 122.

6 **Menteith and Breadalbane.** Two neighbouring districts. Menteith, south of Loch Vennachar; Breadalbane, in central Perthshire, around Loch Tay.

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars for the ever-green Pine!
O that the rose-bud that graces yon islands
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honoured and blessed in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

6. Her mother calls Ellen to go down with her to receive Sir Roderick; but she, hearing her father's horn at that instant on the opposite shore, flies to meet him and Malcolm Græme, who is by-and-by received with cold and stately civility by the lord of the isle.

7. After some time, Sir Roderick informs the Douglas that his retreat has been discovered by the royal spies, and that he has great reason to believe that the king (James V.), under pretence of hunting, had assembled a large force in the neighbourhood, and was bent on their destruction. He then proposes, somewhat impetuously, that they should unite their fortunes indissolubly by his marriage with Ellen, and rouse the whole Western Highlands to repress the invasion.

8. The Douglas, with many expressions of gratitude, declines both the war and the alliance. Intimating that his daughter has repugnances which she cannot overcome, and that he, though ungratefully used by his sovereign, will never lift his arm against him, he declares that he will retire to a cave in the neighbouring mountains till the issue of the threat is seen. The strong heart of Roderick is wrung with agony at this rejection; and when Malcolm advances to offer his services, as Ellen rises to retire, he is violently pushed aside by the chieftain, and a scuffle ensues of no very dignified character, which is with difficulty appeased by the giant arm of Douglas. Malcolm then

withdraws in proud resentment; and, refusing to be indebted to the surly chief even for the use of his boat, plunges into the water, and swims over by moonlight to the mainland.

CANTO III.—THE GATHERING.

9. The third canto opens with an account of the ceremonies employed by Sir Roderick in preparing for the summoning or gathering of his clan. This is accomplished by the consecration of a small wooden cross, which, with its points scorched and dipped in blood, is circulated with incredible celerity through the whole territory of the chieftain.

Then Roderick, with impatient look,
From Bryan's hand[1] the symbol took:
"Speed, Malise,[2] speed!" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his henchman brave.
"The muster-place be Lanrick mead[3]—
Instant the time! Speed, Malise, speed!"
Like heath-bird when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch Katrine flew;
High stood the henchman on the prow:
So rapidly the bargemen row,
The bubbles where they launched the boat
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathoms wide,
When lightly bounded to the land
The messenger of blood and brand.—
Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;

1 **Bryan**, a hermit in the service of Roderick. He performed the ceremony of consecrating the Fiery Cross.

2 **Malise**, Roderick's henchman or squire.

3 **Lanrick mead**, a meadow on the north side of Loch Vennachar.

From winding glen, from upland brown,
They poured each hardy tenant down.
Nor slacked the messenger his pace:
He showed the sign—he named the place—
And pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind.
The fisherman[1] forsook the strand;
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changëd cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe his scythe;
The herds without a keeper strayed;
The plough was in mid-furrow stayed;
The falconer tossed his hawk away;
The hunter left the stag at bay:
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms.
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray.[2]

Speed, Malise, speed! The lake is passed,
Duncraggan's[3] huts appear at last:
There mayest thou rest, thy labour done—
Their lord shall speed the signal on.—
What woful accents load the gale?
The funeral yell, the female wail!
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er;
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Within the hall, where torches' ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day.
Lies Duncan[4] on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear.

1 **The fisherman**, etc. Note the care and skill with which the stoppage of each kind of labour is described.

2 **Achray**, a small lake between Loch Katrine and Loch Vennachar.

3 **Duncraggan**, a farm or hamlet between Achray and Vennachar.

4 **Duncan**, the dead lord of Duncraggan.

His stripling son stands mournful by ;
His youngest weeps, but knows not why ;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach[1] resound.

All stand aghast. Unheeding all,
The henchman bursts into the hall ;
Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the Cross besmeared with blood :
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead !
Speed forth the signal ! clansmen, speed !"
Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broadsword tied ;
But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu.
"Alas !" she sobbed—"and yet, be gone,
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son !"[2]
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dashed from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep, to clear his labouring breast,
And tossed aloft his bonnet crest ;
Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanished, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.

10. In the meantime, Douglas and his daughter have taken refuge in the mountain cave ; and Sir Roderick, passing near their retreat on the way to the muster, hears Ellen's voice singing

1 **Coronach**, funeral song ; dirge.

2 **Like Duncan's son**, as becomes Duncan's son.

her evening hymn. He does not obtrude on her devotions, but hurries to the place of meeting, where his clansmen welcome him with a shout of acclamation, and then couch on the bare heath for the night.

CANTO IV.—THE PROPHECY.

11. This canto begins with more incantations, performed by a wild hermit of the glen with a view to ascertain the issue of the impending war; and this oracular response is obtained:—

> "Which spills the foremost foeman's life,
> That party conquers in the strife."

12. We are then introduced to the minstrel[1] and Ellen, whom he strives to comfort for the alarming disappearance of her father by singing a long fairy ballad to her. Just as the ballad is ended, the Knight of Snowdoun again appears before her, declares his love, and urges her to put herself under his protection. Ellen, alarmed, throws herself on his generosity, confesses her attachment to Græme, and with difficulty prevails on him to seek his own safety by a speedy retreat from these dangerous confines.

13. The gallant stranger at last complies; but before he goes he presents her with a ring which he says he received from the hand of King James with a promise to grant any boon that should be asked by the person producing it. As he pursues his way through the wild, his suspicions are excited by the conduct of his guide,[2] and confirmed by the musical warnings of a mad woman, who sings to him about the toils that are set and the knives that are whetted against him. He then threatens his false guide, who discharges an arrow at him, which kills the maniac. The knight slays the murderer; and learning from

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1 **The minstrel**, Allan-bane, an attendant of Douglas.

2 **His guide**, the Red Murdoch, a retainer of Roderick.

the expiring victim that her brain had been turned by the cruelty of Sir Roderick, he vows vengeance on his head; and proceeds with grief and apprehension along his dangerous way.

14. When chilled with the midnight cold, and exhausted with want and exertion, he suddenly comes on a chief reposing by a lonely watch-fire. The chief, springing up with sword in hand, exclaims:—

"Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"—
"A stranger."—"What dost thou require?"—
"Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chilled my limbs with frost."—
"Art thou a friend to Roderick?"—"No."—
"Thou darest not call thyself a foe?"—
"I dare! to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous hand."—
"Bold words! but though the beast of game
The privilege of chase may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend
Ere hound we slip or bow we bend,
Who ever recked, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped or slain?
Thus treacherous scouts,[1]—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou camest a secret spy!"—
"They do, by heaven! Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest."—
"If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of knight."—
"Then by these tokens mayest thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."—

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1 **Thus treacherous scouts** are treated; that is to say, it is lawful to trap them like foxes.

"Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare.
To assail a wearied man were shame,
And stranger is a holy name;
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford;[1]
From thence thy warrant is thy sword."—
"I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
As freely as 'tis nobly given!"—
"Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."—
With that he shook the gathered heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath:
And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down, like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

CANTO V.—THE COMBAT.

15. The knight and the Highlander rouse themselves at dawn, and proceed toward the Lowland frontier; the latter seeking, by the way, at once to vindicate the character of Sir Roderick and to justify the predatory habits of his clan. Fitz-James expresses freely his detestation of both: and, the dispute growing warm, he says that never lover longed so to see the lady of his heart as he to see before him this murderous chief and his myrmidons.

---

1 Coilantogle's ford, below the east end of Loch Vennachar.

16. "Have then thy wish!" answers his guide, as he gives a loud whistle; whereupon a whole legion of armed men start up at once from their mountain ambush in the heath; while the chief turns proudly and says, these are the warriors of Clan-Alpine, and "I am Roderick Dhu."

17. The Lowland knight, though startled, repeats his defiance; and Sir Roderick, respecting his valour, by a signal dismisses his men to their concealment, and assures him anew of his safety till they pass the frontier. Arrived on this equal ground, the chief demands satisfaction, and forces the knight, who tries all honourable means of avoiding the combat with so generous an adversary, to stand on his defence.

Then each at once his falchion drew;
Each on the ground his scabbard threw;
Each looked to sun, and stream, and plain,
As what he ne'er might see again;—
Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.
Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe[1] he threw,
Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dashed aside;
For, trained abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintained unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade[2] drank blood;—
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing flood the tartans dyed.

1 Targe, his round shield, made of light wood covered with leather.

2 The Saxon blade, that of Fitz-James.

Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And showered his blows like wintry rain;
And as firm rock or castle-roof
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe, invulnerable still,
Foiled his wild rage by steady skill;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
And backward borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.
"Now, yield thee, or by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!"—
"Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
Let recreant yield, who fears to die."—
Like adder darting[1] from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;
Received, but recked not of a wound,
And locked his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel
Through bars of brass and triple steel!—
They tug, they strain!—down, down they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below!
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compressed,
His knee was planted in his breast;
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleamed aloft his dagger bright!—

1 **Like adder darting, etc.** The description of the combat is the most spirited passage in the poem; but the eighteen lines beginning with line 324 surpass the rest in vivid descriptive power.

But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For while the dagger gleamed on high,
Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye.
Down came the blow! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp;—
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

18. Fitz-James, sounding his bugle, brings four squires to his side, and after giving the wounded chief into their charge, gallops rapidly on toward Stirling.

19. As he ascends the hill to the castle, he descries the giant form of Douglas approaching the same place; and the reader is then told that this generous lord had taken the resolution of delivering himself up voluntarily, with a view to save Malcolm Græme, and if possible Sir Roderick also, from the impending danger. As he draws near to the castle, he sees the king and his train descending to grace the holiday sports of the commonalty, and resolves to mingle in them, and present himself to the eye of his alienated sovereign as victor in those humbler contentions.

20. He wins the prize accordingly in archery, wrestling, and pitching the bar; and receives his reward from the hand of the prince, who does not condescend to recognize his former favourite by one glance of affection. Roused at last by an insult from one of the royal grooms, he proclaims himself aloud; is ordered into custody by the king, and represses a tumult of the populace which is excited for his rescue.

21. At this instant a messenger arrives with tidings of an approaching battle between the clan of Roderick and the king's lieutenant, the Earl of Mar. He is ordered back to

prevent the combat, by announcing that both Sir Roderick and Lord Douglas are in the hands of their sovereign.

CANTO VI.—THE GUARD-ROOM.

22. The last canto opens with an animated description of the motley mercenaries that formed the royal guard, as they appeared at early dawn, after a night of stern debauch. While they are quarrelling and singing, the sentinels introduce an old minstrel and a veiled maiden, who have been forwarded by Mar to the royal presence; and Ellen, disclosing her countenance, awes the ruffian soldiery into respect and pity by her grace and liberality. She is then conducted to a more seemly waiting-place till the king should be visible.

23. Allan-bane, having asked to be taken to the prison of his captive lord,[1] is led by mistake to the bedside of Roderick Dhu, who is dying of his wounds in a gloomy apartment of the castle. The high-souled chieftain inquires eagerly after the fortunes of his clan, the Douglas, and Ellen. When he learns that a battle has been fought with doubtful success, he entreats the minstrel to soothe his parting spirit with a description of it, and with the victor song of his clan. Allan-bane complies; and when the vehement strain is closed, Roderick is found cold and dead, and Allan mourns him in a pathetic lament.

24. In the meantime, Ellen hears the voice of Malcolm Græme lamenting his captivity from an adjoining turret of the palace; and before she has recovered from her agitation she is startled by the appearance of Fitz-James, who comes to inform her that the court is assembled, and the king at leisure to receive her suit. He conducts her trembling steps to the hall of presence:—

> With beating heart and bosom wrung
> As to a brother's arm she clung.

---

1 **His captive lord**, Douglas.

Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whispered hope and cheer;
Her faltering steps half led, half stayed,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.
Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And from their tissue fancy frames
Aërial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing stayed,
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought who owned this state,
The dreaded prince whose will was fate!
She gazed on many a princely port,
Might well have ruled a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
Then turned bewildered and amazed,
For all stood bare; and, in the room
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent;
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
'Midst furs, and silks, and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring,—
And Snowdoun's Knight[1] is Scotland's King!

---

1 **Snowdoun's Knight.** Snowdoun is an old name of Stirling Castle. King James V. was fond of roaming in disguise among his peasantry. From his familiar intercourse with his people they gave him the name of "King of the Commons." His usual name on these occasions was the "Gude-man (farmer) of Ballengiech."

As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choking voice commands,—
She showed the ring,—she clasped her hands.
Oh! not a moment could he brook,
The generous prince, that suppliant look!
Gently he raised her,—and, the while,
Checked with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,
And bade her terrors be dismissed:—
"Yes, Fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes bring;
He will redeem his signet-ring."

25. The prince tells her that her father is already forgiven and restored to favour, and bids her ask a boon for some other person. The name of Græme trembles on her lips; but she cannot trust herself to utter it, and she begs the grace of Roderick Dhu instead. The king answers that he would give his best earldom to restore him to life, and presses her to name some other boon. She blushes and hesitates; and the king in playful vengeance condemns Malcolm Græme to fetters. Then he calls:—

"Malcolm, come forth!"—And, at the word,
Down kneeled the Græme to Scotland's lord.
"For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlawed man,
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name;—
Fetters and warder for the Græme!"—

His chain of gold the king unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

THE STORM AT THE HALKET-HEAD.

[Sir Arthur Wardour and his daughter Isabella have dined with Mr. Oldbuck, "the antiquary," at Monkbarns, where they have met Mr. William Lovel, an admirer of Miss Wardour. In the evening they started for Knockwinnock Castle, their home. The description of their adventure is from Scott's novel, *The Antiquary*. The scene is laid in Forfarshire, near Arbroath, and the time is about the year 1795.]

1. Sir Arthur Wardour and his daughter had set out, according to their first proposal, to return to Knockwinnock by the turnpike road; but Miss Wardour, wishing to avoid Mr. Lovel, who seemed to be waiting for them, proposed to her father that they should walk home by the sands, which, stretching below a picturesque ridge of rocks, afforded at almost all times a pleasanter passage between Knockwinnock and Monkbarns than the highroad.

2. Sir Arthur acquiesced willingly, only stipulating that a little ragged boy, for the guerdon[1] of one penny sterling, should run to meet his coachman, and turn his equipage back to Knockwinnock. When this was arranged, and the emissary despatched, the knight and his daughter left the highroad, and following a wandering path among sandy hillocks, partly grown over with furze and the long grass called bent, soon attained the side of the ocean. The tide was by no means so far out as they had computed; but this gave them no alarm,—there were seldom ten days in the year when it approached so near the cliffs as not to leave a dry passage.

3. The sun was now resting his huge disk upon the edge of

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1 Guerdon, reward.

the level ocean,[1] and gilded the accumulation of towering clouds through which he had travelled the livelong day, and which now assembled on all sides, like misfortunes and disasters around a sinking empire and falling monarch. Still, however, his dying splendour gave a sombre magnificence to the massive congregation of vapours, forming out of their unsubstantial gloom the show of pyramids and towers, some touched with gold, some with purple, some with a hue of deep and dark red. The distant sea, stretched beneath this varied and gorgeous canopy, lay almost portentously still, reflecting back the dazzling and level beams of the descending luminary, and the splendid colouring of the clouds amidst which he was setting. Nearer to the beach, the tide rippled onward in waves of sparkling silver, that imperceptibly, yet rapidly, gained upon the sand.

4. With a mind employed in admiration of the romantic scene, or perhaps on some more agitating topic, Miss Wardour advanced in silence by her father's side. Following the windings of the beach, they passed one projecting point or headland of rock after another, and now found themselves under a huge and continued extent of the precipices by which that iron-bound coast is in most places defended. Long projecting reefs of rock, extending under water, and only evincing their existence by here and there a peak entirely bare, or by the breakers which foamed over those that were partially covered, rendered Knockwinnock bay dreaded by pilots and ship-masters. The crags which rose between the beach and the mainland, to the height of two or three hundred feet, afforded in their crevices shelter for unnumbered sea-fowl, in situations seemingly secured by their dizzy height from the rapacity of man. Many of these wild tribes, with the instinct which sends them to seek the

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1 **Upon the edge of the level ocean.** As the scene is laid in Forfarshire, on the east coast of Scotland, the setting sun could scarcely be seen there "resting his huge disk upon the edge of the level ocean." But the whole scene is imaginary. The coast, with its "dizzy heights" and its "unnumbered sea-fowl," resembles that of Shetland or Orkney even more than that of Forfarshire.

land before a storm arises, were now winging towards their nests with the shrill and dissonant clang which announces disquietude and fear.

5. The disk of the sun became almost totally obscured ere he had altogether sunk below the horizon, and an early and lurid shade of darkness blotted the serene twilight of a summer evening. The wind began next to arise; but its wild and moaning sound was heard for some time, and its effects became visible on the bosom of the sea, before the gale was felt on shore. The mass of waters, now dark and threatening, began to lift itself in larger ridges, and sink in deeper furrows, forming waves that rose high in foam upon the breakers,[1] or burst upon the beach with a sound resembling distant thunder.

6. Appalled by this sudden change of weather, Miss Wardour drew close to her father, and held his arm fast. "I wish," at length she said, but almost in a whisper, as if ashamed to express her increasing apprehensions,—"I wish we had kept the road we intended, or waited at Monkbarns for the carriage." Sir Arthur looked round, but did not see, or would not acknowledge, any signs of an immediate storm. They would reach Knockwinnock, he said, long before the tempest began. But the speed with which he walked, and with which Isabella could hardly keep pace, indicated a feeling that some exertion was necessary to accomplish his consolatory prediction.

7. They were now near the centre of a deep but narrow bay, or recess, formed by two projecting capes of high and inaccessible rock, which shot out into the sea like the horns of a crescent;—and neither durst communicate the apprehension which each began to entertain, that, from the unusually rapid advance of the tide, they might be deprived of the power of proceeding by doubling the promontory which lay before them, or of retreating by the road which brought them thither.

8. As they thus pressed forward, longing doubtless to exchange the easy curving line, which the sinuosities of the bay

1 **Breakers**, here used for rocks; properly waves breaking on rocks.

compelled them to adopt, for a straighter and more expeditious path, though less conformable to the line of beauty, Sir Arthur observed a human figure on the beach advancing to meet them. "Thank God," he exclaimed, "we shall get round Halket-head! that person must have passed it;" thus giving vent to the feeling of hope, though he had suppressed that of apprehension.

9. "Thank God indeed!" echoed his daughter, half audibly, half internally, as expressing the gratitude which she strongly felt. The figure which advanced to meet them made many signs, which the haze of the atmosphere, now disturbed by wind and by a drizzling rain, prevented them from seeing or comprehending distinctly.—Some time before they met, Sir Arthur could recognize the old blue-gowned beggar, Edie Ochiltree.

10. "Turn back! turn back!" exclaimed the vagrant; "why did ye not turn when I waved to you?"—"We thought," replied Sir Arthur, in great agitation, "we thought we could get round Halket-head."—"Halket-head!—the tide will be running on Halket-head by this time like the Fall of Fyers![1]—it was a I could do to get round it twenty minutes since; it was coming in three feet abreast. We will maybe get back by Bally-burgh Ness Point yet. The Lord help us!—it's our only chance. We can but try."

11. "My God, my child!"—"My father! my dear father!" exclaimed the parent and daughter, as, fear lending them strength and speed, they turned to retrace their steps, and endeavoured to double the point, the projection of which formed the southern extremity of the bay.

12. "I heard ye were here frae the bit callant ye sent to meet your carriage," said the beggar, as he trudged stoutly on a step or two behind Miss Wardour; "and I settled it that if I could get down time enough to gie you warning, we wad do weel yet. But I doubt, I doubt, I have been beguiled! for

1 **Fall of Fyers**, or Foyers, in Inverness-shire, the highest waterfall in Scotland.

what mortal ee ever saw sic a race[1] as the tide is rinning e'en now? See, yonder's the Ratton's Skerry; he aye held his neb[2] abune the water in my day, but he's aneath it now."

13. Sir Arthur cast a look in the direction in which the old man pointed. A huge rock, which in general, even in spring-tides, displayed a hulk like the keel of a large vessel, was now quite under water, and its place only indicated by the boiling and breaking of the eddying waves which encountered its submarine resistance.

14. The waves had now encroached so much upon the beach, that the firm and smooth footing which they had hitherto had on the sand must be exchanged for a rougher path close to the foot of the precipice, and in some places even raised upon its lower ledges. It would have been utterly impossible for Sir Arthur Wardour, or his daughter, to have found their way along these shelves without the guidance and encouragement of the beggar, who had been there before in high tides, though never, he acknowledged, "in sae awsome[3] a night as this."

15. It was indeed a dreadful evening. The howling of the storm mingled with the shrieks of the sea-fowl, and sounded like the dirge of the three devoted beings, who, pent between two of the most magnificent, yet most dreadful objects of nature—a raging tide and an insurmountable precipice—toiled along their painful and dangerous path, often lashed by the spray of some giant billow, which threw itself higher on the beach than those that had preceded it. Each minute did their enemy gain ground perceptibly upon them!

16. Still, however, loath to relinquish the last hopes of life, they bent their eyes on the black rock pointed out by Ochiltree. It was yet distinctly visible among the breakers, and continued to be so, until they came to a turn in their precarious path, where an intervening projection of rock hid it from their sight. Deprived of the view of the beacon on which

1 **A race,** not a trial of speed, but a water-course. Thus the mill-*race* is the canal that leads water to the mill-wheel.

2 **Neb,** nose; point.—**Abune.** above.

3 **Sae awsome,** so awful.

they had relied, they now experienced the double agony of terror and suspense. They struggled forward, however; but when they arrived at the point from which they ought to have seen the crag, it was no longer visible: the signal of safety was lost among a thousand white breakers, which, dashing upon the point of the promontory, rose in prodigious sheets of snowy foam, as high as the mast of a first-rate man-of-war, against the dark brow of the precipice.

17. The countenance of the old man fell. Isabella gave a faint shriek; and "God have mercy upon us!" which her guide solemnly uttered, was piteously echoed by Sir Arthur: "My child! my child!—to die such a death!"—"Good man," he said, "can you think of nothing?—of no help?—I'll make you rich—I'll give you a farm—I'll—"—"Our riches will be soon equal," said the beggar, looking out upon the strife of the waters—"they are sae already; for I hae nae land, and you would give your fair bounds and barony for a square yard of rock that would be dry for twal[1] hours."

18. While they exchanged these words, they paused upon the highest ledge of rock to which they could attain; for it seemed that any further attempt to move forward could only serve to anticipate their fate. Here, then, they were to await the sure though slow progress of the raging element, something in the situation of the martyrs of the early Church, who, exposed by heathen tyrants to be slain by wild beasts, were compelled for a time to witness the impatience and rage by which the animals were agitated, while awaiting the signal for undoing their grates and letting them loose upon the victims.

19. Yet even this fearful pause gave Isabella time to collect the powers of a mind naturally strong and courageous, which rallied itself at this terrible juncture. "Must we yield life," she said, "without a struggle? Is there no path, however dreadful, by which we could climb the crag, or at least attain some height above the tide, where we could remain till morn-

1 Twal, twelve.

ing, or till help comes? They must be aware of our situation, and will raise the country to relieve us."

20. Sir Arthur, who heard, but scarcely comprehended, his daughter's question, turned, nevertheless, instinctively and eagerly to the old man, as if their lives were in his gift. Ochiltree paused. "I was a bauld craigsman,"[1] he said, "ance in my life, and mony a kittywake's[2] and lungie's[3] nest hae I harried[4] up amang thae very black rocks; but it's lang, lang syne, and nae mortal could speel[5] them without a rope—and if I had ane, my ee-sight, and my foot-step, and my hand-grip, hae a' failed mony a day sinsyne. And then, how could I save *you?* But there was a path here ance, though maybe, if we could see it, ye would rather bide where we are.

21. "His name be praised!" he ejaculated suddenly, "there's ane coming down the crag e'en now!" Then, exalting his voice, he hilloaed out to the daring adventurer such instructions as his former practice, and the remembrance of local circumstances, suddenly forced upon his mind:—"Ye're right—ye're right!—that gate,[6] that gate!—fasten the rope weel round Crummie's-horn, that's the muckle black stane—cast twa plies round it—that's it!—now, weize[7] yoursell a wee easel-ward[8]—a wee mair yet to that ither stane—we ca'd it the Cat's-lug[9]—there used to be the root o' an aik-tree there[10]—that will do!—canny[11] now, lad—canny now—tak tent[12] and tak time—Lord bless ye, tak time. Vera weel! Now ye maun get to Bessy's Apron, that's the muckle braid[13] flat blue stane—and then, I think, wi' your help and the tow[14] thegither, I'll win at ye,[15] and then we'll be able to get up the young leddy and Sir Arthur."

[As in many schools the Scotch language may prove a difficulty, it has been thought best to give alternatively paragraphs 20 and 21 in English:—

1 **Bauld craigsman**, bold climber of rocks.
2 **Kittywake**, a kind of gull.
3 **Lungie**, guillemot.
4 **Harried**, robbed.
5 **Speel**, climb.
6 **That gate**, that way.
7 **Weize**, direct; twist.
8 **Easel-ward**, eastward.
9 Cat's-lug, cat's ear.
10 **Aik-tree**, oak-tree.
11 **Canny**, careful.
12 **Tak tent**, take care.
13 **Braid**, broad.
14 **The tow**, the rope; pronounced like "now."
15 **I'll win at ye**, I will reach you.

20. Sir Arthur, who heard, but scarcely comprehended, his daughter's question, turned, nevertheless, instinctively and eagerly to the old man, as if their lives were in his gift. Ochiltree paused. "I was a bold cragsman," he said, "once in my life, and many a kittywake's and other bird's nest have I robbed up among these very black rocks; but it's long, long since, and no mortal could climb them without a rope—and if I had one, my eyesight, and my footstep, and my hand-grip, have all failed many a day since then. And then, how could I save *you*? But there was a path here once, though maybe, if we could see it, you would rather stay where you are.

21. "His name be praised!" he ejaculated suddenly, "there's some one coming down the crag even now!" Then, exalting his voice, he hilloaed out to the daring adventurer such instructions as his former practice, and the remembrance of local circumstances, suddenly forced upon his mind: —"You are right—you are right!—that way, that way!—fasten the rope well round Crummie's-horn, that's the big black stone—cast two plies round it—that's it!—now, twist yourself a little eastward—a little more yet to that other stone—we called it the Cat's-ear—there used to be the root of an oak-tree there—that will do!—careful now, lad—careful now—take care and take time—Lord bless you, take time. Very well! Now you must get to Bessy's Apron, that's the big broad flat blue stone—and then, I think, with your help and the rope together, I'll reach you, and then we'll be able to get up the young lady and Sir Arthur."]

22. The adventurer, following the directions of old Edie, flung him down the end of the rope, which he secured around Miss Wardour, wrapping her previously in his own blue gown, to preserve her as much as possible from injury. Then, availing himself of the rope, which was made fast at the other end, he began to ascend the face of the crag—a most precarious and dizzy undertaking, which, however, after one or two perilous escapes, placed him safe on the broad flat stone beside our friend Lovel. Their joint strength was able to raise Isabella to the place of safety which they had attained. Lovel then descended in order to assist Sir Arthur, around whom he adjusted the rope; and again mounting to their place of refuge, with the assistance of old Ochiltree, and such aid as Sir Arthur himself could afford, he raised himself beyond the reach of the billows.

23. The sense of reprieve from approaching and apparently inevitable death had its usual effect. The father and daughter threw themselves into each other's arms, kissed and wept for joy, although their escape was connected with the prospect of

passing a tempestuous night upon a precipitous ledge of rock, which scarce afforded footing for the four shivering beings, who now, like the sea fowl around them, clung there in hopes of some shelter from the devouring element which raged beneath. The spray of the billows, which attained in fearful succession the foot of the precipice, overflowing the beach on which they so lately stood, flew as high as their place of temporary refuge; and the stunning sound with which they dashed against the rocks beneath, seemed as if they still demanded the fugitives in accents of thunder as their destined prey. It was a summer night, doubtless, yet the probability was slender that a frame so delicate as that of Miss Wardour should survive till morning the drenching of the spray; and the dashing of the rain, which now burst in full violence, accompanied with deep and heavy gusts of wind, added to the constrained and perilous circumstances of their situation.

24. "What is to be done?" said Lovel. "Hark! hark!—did I not hear a halloo?"—"The skriegh of a Tammie Norie,"[1] answered Ochiltree, "I ken the skirl[2] weel."—"No, by Heaven!" replied Lovel, "it was a human voice."—A distant hail was repeated, the sound plainly distinguishable among the various elemental noises, and the clang of the sea-mews by which they were surrounded. The mendicant and Lovel exerted their voices in a loud halloo, the former waving Miss Wardour's handkerchief on the end of his staff to make them conspicuous from above.

25. The shout of human voices from above was soon augmented, and the gleam of torches mingled with those lights of evening which still remained amidst the darkness of the storm. Some attempt was made to hold communication between the assistants above and the sufferers beneath, who were still clinging to their precarious place of safety; but the howling of the tempest limited their intercourse to cries as inarticulate as those of the winged denizens of the crag, which shrieked in chorus,

1 **The skriegh of a Tammie Norie,** "the scream of a puffin." 2 **Skirl,** shriek.

alarmed by the reiterated sound of human voices, where they had seldom been heard.

26. On the verge of the precipice an anxious group had now assembled. Oldbuck was the foremost and most earnest, pressing forward with unwonted desperation to the very brink of the crag, and extending his head (his hat and wig secured by a handkerchief under his chin) over the dizzy height, with an air of determination which made his more timorous assistants tremble.

27. The fishers had brought with them the mast of a boat, and as half of the country fellows about had now appeared. either out of zeal or curiosity, it was soon sunk in the ground, and sufficiently secured. A yard, across the upright mast, and a rope stretched along it, and reeved through a block at each end, formed an extempore crane, which afforded the means of lowering an arm-chair, well secured and fastened, down to the flat shelf on which the sufferers had roosted. Their joy at hearing the preparations going on for their deliverance was considerably qualified when they beheld the precarious vehicle by means of which they were to be conveyed to upper air. It swung about a yard free of the spot which they occupied, obeying each impulse of the tempest, the empty air all around it, and depending upon the security of a rope, which, in the increasing darkness, had dwindled to an almost imperceptible thread.

28. But to diminish the risk as much as possible, the experienced seamen had let down with the chair another line, which, being attached to it, and held by the persons beneath, might serve by way of *guy*, to render its descent in some measure steady and regular. Lovel and the old mendicant agreed, after a moment's consultation, and after the former, by a sudden strong pull, had, at his own imminent risk, ascertained the security of the rope, that it would be best to secure Miss Wardour in the chair, and trust to the tenderness and care of those above for her being safely craned up to the top of the crag.

29. Shutting her eyes, as Edie's experience recommended, she gave the signal to Lovel, and he to those who were above. She rose, while the chair in which she sat was kept steady by the line which Lovel managed beneath. With a beating heart he watched the flutter of her white dress, until the vehicle was on a level with the brink of the precipice. A loud shout announced the successful experiment[1] to her fellow-sufferers beneath, who replied with a ready and cheerful halloo. ×

JEANIE DEANS AND QUEEN CAROLINE.

[Jeanie Deans has gone from Edinburgh to London—most of the way on foot—to plead with the Queen for the pardon of her sister, Effie Deans, who has been sentenced to death for the murder of her infant child. Effie declares herself to be innocent of the crime, and Jeanie believes her to be so—as it turns out that she is. Jeanie takes with her a letter of introduction to the Duke of Argyle from Mr. Reuben Butler, schoolmaster, who tells the Duke that an ancestor of his had saved the life of his grace's grandfather. The Duke takes Jeanie in his carriage to the royal lodge at Richmond, where Queen Caroline is staying. The story forms the subject of Scott's *Heart of Midlothian*, which opens with a description of the Porteous Mob, 1736, reign of George II.]

1. From the narrow alley which Jeanie and the Duke had traversed, they turned into one of the same character, but broader and still longer. Here, for the first time since they had entered these gardens, Jeanie saw persons approaching them.

2. They were two ladies, one of whom walked a little behind the other, yet not so much as to prevent her from hearing and replying to whatever observation was addressed to her by the lady who walked foremost, and that without her having the trouble to turn her person. As they advanced very slowly, Jeanie had time to study their features and appearance. The Duke also slackened his pace, as if to give her time to collect herself, and repeatedly desired her not to be afraid.

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1 **Successful experiment.** The others were hoisted in the same way to the top of the cliff.

3. The lady who seemed the principal person had remarkably good features, though somewhat injured by the small-pox. The lady's eyes were brilliant, her teeth good, and her countenance formed to express at will either majesty or courtesy. Her form, though rather *embonpoint*,[1] was nevertheless graceful; and the elasticity and firmness of her step gave no room to suspect, what was actually the case, that she suffered occasionally from a disorder[2] the most unfavourable to pedestrian exercise. Her dress was rather rich than gay,[3] and her manner commanding and noble.

4. Her companion (Lady Suffolk) was of lower stature, with light-brown hair and expressive blue eyes. Her features, without being absolutely regular, were perhaps more pleasing than if they had been critically handsome. A melancholy, or at least a pensive expression predominated[4] when she was silent, but gave way to a pleasing and good-humoured smile when she spoke to any one.

5. When they were within twelve or fifteen yards of these ladies, the Duke made a sign that Jeanie should stand still, and stepping forward himself, with the grace which was natural to him, made a profound obeisance, which was formally, yet in a dignified manner, returned by the personage whom he approached.

6. "I hope," she said, with an affable and condescending smile, "that I see so great a stranger at Court,[5] as the Duke of Argyle has been of late, in as good health as his friends there and elsewhere could wish him to enjoy."

7. The Duke replied, "That he had been perfectly well;" and added, "that the necessity of attending to the public business before the House, as well as the time occupied by a late

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1 **Embonpoint** (*ŏng-bŏng-pwĭng*), plump; stout. Fr. for "in-good-point," in good condition.

2 **A disorder**—namely, gout in the feet.

3 **Rather rich than gay**, of good quality rather than showy. The difference is nicely expressed by the words chosen.

4 **Predominated**, was strongest.

5 **So great a stranger at Court.** A nobleman (and especially a powerful Highland chieftain like Argyle) who absented himself from Court was suspected of Jacobite leanings. The lady is, of course, Queen Caroline, wife of George II.

journey to Scotland, had rendered him less assiduous in paying his duty at the levee and drawing-room than he could have desired."……

8. "You cannot oblige me more, my Lord Duke," replied the Queen, "than by giving me the advantage of your lights and experience on any point of the King's service. Your Grace is aware that I can only be the medium through which the matter is subjected to his Majesty's superior wisdom; but if it is a suit which respects your Grace personally, it shall lose no support by being preferred through me."

9. "It is no suit of mine, madam," replied the Duke; "nor have I any to prefer for myself personally, although I feel in full force my obligation to your Majesty. It is a business which concerns his Majesty, as a lover of justice and of mercy, and which, I am convinced, may be highly useful in conciliating the unfortunate irritation[1] which at present subsists among his Majesty's good subjects in Scotland."

10. "What is the affair, my Lord?" said the Queen. "Let us find out what we are talking about, lest we should misconstrue and misunderstand each other."

11. "The matter, madam," answered the Duke of Argyle, "regards the fate of an unfortunate young woman in Scotland, now lying under sentence of death for a crime of which I think it highly probable that she is innocent. And my humble petition to your Majesty is, to obtain your powerful intercession with the King for a pardon."

12. It was now the Queen's turn to colour, and she did so, over cheek and brow, neck and bosom. She paused a moment, as if unwilling to trust her voice with the first expression of her displeasure; and on assuming an air of dignity and an

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1 **Unfortunate irritation**, caused by the affair of Captain Porteous. At an execution in Edinburgh that officer ordered his soldiers to fire on the mob, which showed sympathy with the prisoner, and several persons were killed. Porteous was tried and sentenced to death, but got a reprieve. The mob broke open the jail in which he was confined, dragged him out and hanged him from a dyer's pole. The Government threatened to demolish the walls and take away the charter of Edinburgh, but that the Scottish members prevented.

austere regard of control, she at length replied, "My Lord Duke, I will not ask your motives for addressing to me a request which circumstances have rendered such an extraordinary one. Your road to the King's closet, as a peer and a privy-councillor, entitled to request an audience, was open, without giving me the pain of this discussion. *I*, at least, have had enough of Scotch pardons."[1]

13. The Duke was prepared for this burst of indignation, and he was not shaken by it. He did not attempt a reply while the Queen was in the first heat of displeasure, but remained in the same firm yet respectful posture which he had assumed during the interview. The Queen, trained from her situation to self-command, instantly perceived the advantage she might give against herself by yielding to passion; and added, in the same condescending and affable tone in which she had opened the interview, "You must allow me some of the privileges of the sex, my Lord; and do not judge uncharitably of me, though I am a little moved at the recollection of the gross insult and outrage done in your capital city to the royal authority, at the very time when it was vested in my unworthy person. Your Grace cannot be surprised that I should both have felt it at the time and recollected it now."

14. "It is certainly a matter not speedily to be forgotten," answered the Duke. "My own poor thoughts of it have been long before your Majesty, and I must have expressed myself very ill if I did not convey my detestation of the murder which was committed under such extraordinary circumstances. I might, indeed, be so unfortunate as to differ with his Majesty's advisers on the degree in which it was either just or politic to punish the innocent instead of the guilty. But I trust your Majesty will permit me to be silent on a topic in which my sentiments have not the good fortune to coincide with those of more able men."

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1 **Scotch pardons**, another reference to the Porteous incident.

15. "Then," said the Queen, "your Grace must yourself take the trouble to explain the affair of your *protégée*." [1]

16. With that precision and easy brevity which is only acquired by habitually conversing in the higher ranks of society, and which is the diametrical opposite of that protracted style of disquisition

"Which squires call potter, and which men call prose,"

the Duke explained the singular law under which Effie Deans had received sentence of death, and detailed the affectionate exertions which Jeanie had made in behalf of a sister, for whose sake she was willing to sacrifice all but truth and conscience.

17. Queen Caroline listened with attention; she was rather fond, it must be remembered, of an argument, and soon found matter in what the Duke told her for raising difficulties to his request.

18. "It appears to me, my Lord," she replied, "that this is a severe law. But still it is adopted upon good grounds, I am bound to suppose, as the law of the country, and the girl has been convicted under it. The very presumptions which the law construes into a positive proof of guilt exist in her case; and all that your Grace has said concerning the possibility of her innocence may be a very good argument for annulling the Act of Parliament, but cannot, while it stands good, be admitted in favour of any individual convicted upon the statute."

19. The Duke saw and avoided the snare, for he was conscious that, by replying to the argument, he must have been inevitably led to a discussion, in the course of which the Queen was likely to be hardened in her own opinion, until she became obliged, out of mere respect to consistency, to let the criminal suffer. "If your Majesty," he said, "would condescend to hear my poor countrywoman herself, perhaps she may find an advocate in your own heart, more able than I am, to combat the doubts suggested by your understanding."

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1 **Protégée**, ward; lit., one protected.

20. The Queen seemed to acquiesce, and the Duke made a signal for Jeanie to advance from the spot where she had hitherto remained, watching countenances which were too long accustomed to suppress all apparent signs of emotion to convey to her any interesting intelligence. Her Majesty could not help smiling at the awe-struck manner in which the quiet, demure figure of the little Scotchwoman advanced towards her, and yet more at the first sound of her broad northern accent. But Jeanie had a voice low and sweetly toned—an admirable thing in woman—and eke besought "her Leddyship to have pity on a poor misguided young creature," in tones so affecting that, like the notes of some of her native songs,[1] provincial vulgarity was lost in pathos.

21. "Stand up, young woman," said the Queen, but in a kind tone, "and tell me what sort of a barbarous people your countryfolk are where child-murder is become so common as to require the restraint of laws like yours?"—"If your Leddyship pleases," answered Jeanie, "there are mony places besides Scotland where mothers are unkind to their ain flesh and blood."

22. It must be observed that the disputes between George the Second and Frederick, Prince of Wales, were then at the highest, and that the good-natured part of the public laid the blame on the Queen. She coloured highly, and darted a glance of a most penetrating character first at Jeanie and then at the Duke. Both sustained it unmoved; Jeanie from total unconsciousness of the offence she had given, and the Duke from his habitual composure. But in his heart he thought, My unlucky *protégée* has with this luckless answer shot dead, by a kind of chance-medley, her only hope of success.

23. Again applying herself to Jeanie, she asked how she travelled up from Scotland.—"Upon my foot mostly, madam,"

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1 **Like the notes of some of her native songs.** The meaning is plain, but the expression is faulty. "Provincial vulgarity" is likened to "the notes of some of her native songs," and both are said to be "lost in pathos." It would have been better thus: "In tones so affecting that, as in the case of some of her native songs, provincial vulgarity was lost in pathos."

was the reply.—"What, all that immense way upon foot? How far can you walk in a day?"—"Five-and-twenty miles and a bittock."—"And a what?" said the Queen, looking towards the Duke of Argyle.—"And about five miles more," replied the Duke.—"I thought I was a good walker," said the Queen, "but this shames me sadly."—"May your Leddyship never hae sae weary a heart that ye canna be sensible of the weariness of the limbs," said Jeanie.—That came better off, thought the Duke; it's the first thing she has said to the purpose.

24. "And I didna just a'thegither walk the haill way neither, for I had whiles the cast of a cart; and I had the cast of a horse from Ferrybridge—and divers other easements," said Jeanie, cutting short her story, for she observed the Duke touched his chin—the sign he had fixed upon.

[*In English.*—24. "And I did not just altogether walk the whole way neither, for I had sometimes a ride in a cart; and I had a ride on a horse from Ferrybridge, and divers other helps," said Jeanie, cutting short her story, for she observed the Duke touched his chin—the sign he had fixed upon.]

25. "With all these accommodations," answered the Queen, "you must have had a very fatiguing journey, and, I fear, to little purpose; since, if the King were to pardon your sister, in all probability it would do her little good, for I suppose your people of Edinburgh would hang her out of spite."

26. She will sink herself now outright, thought the Duke. But he was wrong. The shoals on which Jeanie had touched in this delicate conversation lay underground, and were unknown to her; this rock was above water, and she avoided it. "She was confident," she said, "that baith town and country wad rejoice to see his Majesty taking compassion on a poor unfriended creature."

27. "His Majesty has not found it so in a late instance," said the Queen; "but I suppose my Lord Duke would advise him to be guided by the votes of the rabble themselves, who should be hanged and who spared?"—"No, madam," said the

Duke; "but I would advise his Majesty to be guided by his own feelings, and those of his royal consort; and then, I am sure, punishment will only attach itself to guilt, and even then with cautious reluctance."

28. "Well, my Lord," said her Majesty, "all these fine speeches do not convince me of the propriety of so soon showing any mark of favour to your—I suppose I must not say rebellious?—but, at least, your very disaffected and intractable metropolis. Why, the whole nation is in a league to screen the savage and abominable murderers of that unhappy man;[1] otherwise, how is it possible but that, of so many perpetrators, and engaged in so public an action for such a length of time, one at least must have been recognized? Even this wench, for aught I can tell, may be a depository of the secret.—Hark you, young woman, had you any friends engaged in the Porteous mob?"

29. "No, madam," answered Jeanie, happy that the question was so framed that she could, with a good conscience, answer it in the negative.—"But I suppose," continued the Queen, "if you were possessed of such a secret, you would hold it a matter of conscience to keep it to yourself?"—"I would pray to be directed and guided what was the line of duty, madam," answered Jeanie.—"Yes, and take that which suited your own inclinations," replied her Majesty.

30. "If it like you,[2] madam," said Jeanie, "I would hae gaen[3] to the end of the earth to save the life of John Porteous, or any other unhappy man in his condition; but I might lawfully doubt how far I am called upon to be the avenger of his blood, though it may become the civil magistrate to do so. He is dead and gane[4] to his place, and they that have slain him must answer for their ain act.[5] But my sister—my puir[6] sister Effie—still lives, though her days and hours are numbered! She still

1 **That unhappy man,** Captain Porteous.
2 **If it like you,** Scotch for "if you please."
3 **Hae gaen,** have gone.
4 **Gane, gone.**
5 **Ain act,** own act.
6 **Puir,** poor.

lives, and a word of the King's mouth might restore her to a broken-hearted auld[1] man that never, in his daily and nightly exercise,[2] forgot to pray that his Majesty might be blessed with a long and a prosperous reign, and that his throne, and the throne of his posterity, might be established in righteousness. O madam, if ever ye kend[3] what it was to sorrow for and with a sinning and a suffering creature, whose mind is sae[4] tossed that she can be neither ca'd[5] fit to live or die, have some compassion on our misery! Save an honest house from dishonour, and an unhappy girl, not eighteen years of age, from an early and dreadful death! Alas! it is not when we sleep soft and wake merrily ourselves that we think on other people's sufferings. Our hearts are waxed light within us then, and we are for righting our ain wrangs and fighting our ain battles. But when the hour of trouble comes to the mind or to the body—and seldom may it visit your Leddyship—and when the hour of death comes, that comes to high and low—lang and late may it be yours!—oh, my Leddy, then it isna[6] what we hae dune[7] for oursells,[8] but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly. And the thoughts that ye hae intervened to spare the puir thing's life will be sweeter in that hour, come when it may, than if a word of your mouth could hang the haill[9] Porteous mob at the tail of ae tow."[10]

31. Tear followed tear down Jeanie's cheeks as, her features glowing and quivering with emotion, she pleaded her sister's cause with a pathos which was at once simple and solemn.

32. "This is eloquence," said her Majesty to the Duke of Argyle.—"Young woman," she continued, addressing herself to Jeanie, "*I* cannot grant a pardon to your sister—but you shall not want my warm intercession with his Majesty. Take this housewife-case," she continued, putting a small embroidered

1 **Auld**, old.
2 **Daily and nightly exercise**, family worship.
3 **Kend**, knew.
4 **Sae**, so.
5 **Ca'd**, called.
6 **Isna**, is not.
7 **Hae dune**, have done.
8 **Oursells**, ourselves.
9 **Haill**, whole.
10 **At the tail of ae tow**, at the end of one rope.

needle-case into Jeanie's hands; "do not open it now, but at your leisure—you will find something in it[1] which will remind you that you have had an interview with Queen Caroline."

33. Jeanie, having her suspicions thus confirmed, dropped on her knees, and would have expanded herself in gratitude; but the Duke, who was upon thorns lest she should say more or less than just enough, touched his chin once more.

34. "Our business is, I think, ended for the present, my Lord Duke," said the Queen, "and, I trust, to your satisfaction. Hereafter I hope to see your Grace more frequently, both at Richmond and St. James's.—Come, Lady Suffolk, we must wish his Grace good-morning."

35. They exchanged their parting reverences, and the Duke, so soon as the ladies had turned their backs, assisted Jeanie to rise from the ground, and conducted her back through the avenue, which she trod with the feeling of one who walks in her sleep.

BORDER WAR SONG.

[This song occurs in Scott's novel, *The Monastery*. It has a fine martial ring in its lines; but it is not a ballad. It does not tell a story: it is an appeal to patriotism.]

March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale,[2]
Why dinna[3] ye march forward in order?
March, march, Eskdale and Liddesdale,
All the Blue Bonnets[4] are bound for the Border
Many a banner spread
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story.
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the Queen and our old Scottish glory.

1 **Something in it.** It contained a fifty-pound note.

2 **Ettrick and Teviotdale**, men of these districts.

3 **Dinna**, do not.

4 **The Blue Bonnets**, the Border clans—the men of which wore these bonnets—an example of the figure *metonymy*.

Come from the hills where your hirsels[1] are grazing,
Come from the glen of the buck and the roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow.
Trumpets are sounding,
War-steeds are bounding,
Stand to your arms, and march in good order;
England shall many a day
Tell of the bloody fray
When the Blue Bonnets came over the Border.

1 **Hirsels**, flocks of sheep.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

1. Robert Southey, the son of a linen-draper, was born at Bristol on the 12th of August 1774. After passing through various local schools, he went, in 1788, at the expense of his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, to the famous school of Westminster. From that school he was expelled four years afterwards, owing to the share he had had in an article against flogging which appeared in a school magazine conducted by the senior boys.

2. He entered Balliol College, Oxford, in 1792, and spent a couple of years in general reading and industrious verse-making; but he carried away from the university, by his own account, a knowledge of only two things—how to row, and how to swim.

3. At Oxford, Southey was visited by Coleridge,[1] from Cambridge, in whom he found a kindred spirit. Both were smitten with the widening swell of the French Revolution; both were rank Republicans in politics, and Unitarians in religion; and they formed, along with a few others, the wild scheme of migrating to America and founding there a "Pantisocracy"[2]—a domestic Republic in which all property should be held in common, and the leisure of the workmen should be devoted to literature. The dream, it needs hardly be said, was never realized.

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1 **Coleridge,** Samuel Taylor, poet, philosopher, and conversationalist; author of *The Ancient Mariner* and *Babe Christabel*. (1772–1834.)

2 **Pantisocracy,** government by all. A word modelled on aristocracy and democracy. It was a form of Communism, the theory which denies the right to private property. [Greek *pantis*, from *pas*, all; and *kratos*, power.]

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

4. Southey, Coleridge, and their friend Lovell, another of the "Pantisocrats," became the husbands of three sisters of Bristol, all of whom in a short time were gathered under Southey's roof at Greta Hall, Keswick ;[1] for Lovell soon died, and Coleridge in his vast dreamings often forgot the real duty of providing for his wife and children. Nothing shows better Southey's unselfishness and genuine goodness of heart than the care he took of his sisters-in-law and of Coleridge's children.

5. Already Southey's pen was busily at work. While at college, he had composed an epic poem, *Joan of Arc*, for which a kindly bookseller of Bristol now gave the young husband fifty guineas. A volume of poems written jointly with Lovell had previously appeared ;

1 **Keswick, in Cumberland ; the centre of the Lake District.**

and a wild revolutionary piece, *Wat Tyler*, had been written in a fit of republicanism. Many years afterwards, the last named work was surreptitiously published by a bookseller who wished to annoy Southey, then poet-laureate and a celebrated man.

6. Immediately after his marriage, Southey had spent some time at Lisbon on a visit to his uncle, who was chaplain of the British factory there. On his return he published *Letters from Spain and Portugal*. Then, having received from a college friend an allowance of £160 a year, he settled down to the study of law at Gray's Inn, varied with the writing of *Madoc*, an epic poem. This divided love could not be expected to last, and as usual poetry triumphed over law. Blackstone was put on the shelf, and *Madoc* advanced to completion.

7. His first great poem, *Thalaba, the Destroyer*, appeared in 1801. It was the first of a series of poems intended to illustrate the romantic and poetical features of the stories of mythology. Although the sale of this work was slow, it did much to raise the author's reputation. It was followed by *Madoc* (1805), *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), and *Roderick, the Last of the Goths* (1814).

8. *The Curse of Kehama* is the finest of the series—the finest of all Southey's poems. In verse of most irregular music, but well suited to the fantastic theme, the poet describes the career of Kehama, a Hindu prince, who is burdened with the spell of a terrible curse laid on him by an enchanter. We follow him with sympathy through his penance and self-inflicted torture, by which he raises himself to a level with Brahma, and we rejoice in his final deliverance and restoration to his family. Scenery and costume, situations and sentiments, are all in keeping with the Oriental character of the work; yet

the subject is so far removed from the world to which our sympathies belong, that the poem can be fully appreciated by very few.

9. Southey's desire was to obtain a permanent post under Government, which would secure to him a moderate income, and afford him leisure for literary labour. It was with that view that he began the study of law, which he soon abandoned. It was with that view also that he accepted the office of private secretary to the Irish Chancellor, with a salary of £350 a year; but he kept that post for only six months. Then he became a literary man by profession, and in 1804 he fixed his residence at Greta Hall, in the heart of the Lake District, where Coleridge and Wordsworth had already settled. Hence the name of "Lakists" or "Lake poets' given to the brotherhood.

10. For thirty years Southey continued those incessant labours which gave him a foremost place among the literary men of his time, but which ultimately wore out his brain. Besides his poems, he wrote numerous histories, biographies, and review articles. The best of his prose works, which are written in clear and polished English, are his *Life of Nelson* and *The Doctor*.

11. In a letter to a friend, he thus describes a day, and most of his days were similarly spent:—

"Three pages of history (of Portugal) after breakfast —equivalent to five in small quarto printing; then to transcribe or copy for the press, or to make any selections and biographies (for *Specimens of the British Poets*), or what else suits my humour, till dinner-time. From dinner-time till tea I read, write letters, see the newspaper, and very often indulge in a siesta. After tea, I go to poetry (he was then writing *The Curse of Kehama*), and correct and rewrite and copy till I am

tired, and then turn to anything else till supper. And this is my life."

No wonder that a friend should ask in astonishment, on hearing of such incessant toil, "But, Southey, tell me, when do you *think?*"

12. His eminence as a poet was recognized so early as 1813, when, on the death of Henry Pye, he was made poet-laureate. In 1821, the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of LL.D. With all his incessant toil, Southey did not make money. Like Samuel Johnson, he lived very much "from hand to mouth," until, in 1835, he received from Sir Robert Peel's government a pension of £300 a year.

13. His first wife having died in 1837, he married two years later the poetess Caroline Bowles,[1] who was then fifty-two years of age. The union was on her side one of devotion and self-sacrifice; for she gave up a larger income than she could receive as Southey's widow, in order that she might have a right to minister to his comfort, and to relieve the gloom of his closing years. During the last three years of his life, his over-wrought mind was a total blank. He died at Greta, on the 21st of March 1843.

SUMMARY OF SOUTHEY'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year.	Age.	
1774		Born at Bristol, August 12.
1788	14	Goes to Westminster School.
1792	18	Expelled from Westminster—Goes to Balliol College, Oxford.
1793	19	Writes *Joan of Arc* and *Wat Tyler*.
1794	20	Meets Coleridge at Oxford—Scheme of "Pantisocracy"—Lectures in Bath and Bristol.

1 **Caroline Bowles**, author of *The Widow's Tale, Chapters on Churchyards*, etc. (1787–1854.)

Year. Age

1795...21...Marries Miss Fricker (sister of Mrs. Coleridge and Mrs. Lovell)—Sells *Joan of Arc* for fifty guineas—Goes to Lisbon.

1797...23...Success of *Joan of Arc*—Publishes *Letters written in Spain and Portugal*—Receives £160 a year from W. W. Wynn—Studies law at Gray's Inn.

1801...27...Publishes *Thalaba, the Destroyer.*

1803...29...Goes to live at Greta Hall, Keswick.

1805...31...Publishes *Madoc*—Meets Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh.

1807...33...Receives Government pension of £160 a year.

1809...35...Begins to write for the *Quarterly.*

1810...36...Publishes *The Curse of Kehama.*

1813...39...Succeeds Pye as poet-laureate—Publishes *Life of Nelson.*

1814...40...Publishes *Roderick, the Last of the Goths.*

1821...47...LL.D., Oxford.

1834...60...Begins *The Doctor* (till 1837).

1835...61...Receives Government pension of £300 a year.

1837...63...His wife dies.

1839...65...Marries Caroline Bowles, the poetess.

1843...69...Dies, March 21.

SELECTIONS FROM SOUTHEY.

RODERICK, THE LAST OF THE GOTHS.[1]

[Roderick, last of the Visigothic (West-Gothic) kings of Spain, dethroned Witiza in 710. The sons of Witiza formed a conspiracy against him, which was joined by Count Julian, of Ceuta, and others. They brought over Arabs under Musa to help them; and more Arabs followed under Tarik in 711. In the battle of Xeres, the Goths were defeated, and Roderick was slain, or was drowned in his flight. That is the historical account. But Roderick's fate is the theme of many Spanish romances, whence Southey derived the material for his poem.]

1. Roderick, the valiant and generous king of the Goths, being unhappily married, allows his affections to wander on Florinda, the lovely daughter of Count Julian. On account of an insult offered to this lady, her father invites the Moors to seize on the kingdom of the guilty monarch; and, assuming their faith,[2] guides them at last to a signal and sanguinary victory.

2. Roderick, after performing prodigies of valour in a seven days' fight, feels at length that Heaven has ordained all this misery as the penalty of his offences; and, overwhelmed with remorse and inward agony, falls from his battle-horse in the midst of the carnage. Stripping off his rich armour, he then puts on the dress of a dead peasant, and, pursued by revengeful furies, rushes desperately on through his lost and desolated kingdom till he is stopped by the sea, on the rocky and lonely shore of which he passes more than a year in constant agonies of penitence and humiliation, till he is roused at length, by visions and impulses, to undertake something for the deliverance of his suffering people.

3. Grief and abstinence have now so changed him that he is recognized by no one, and being universally believed to have fallen in battle, he traverses great part of his former realm,

1 The prose abstract is from Lord Jeffrey's Essays.

2 **Assuming their faith**, having become a Mohammedan.

witnessing innumerable scenes of wretchedness and valour, and rousing by his holy adjurations all the generous spirits in Spain to unite against the invaders.

4. Journeying through deserted hamlets and desolated towns, Roderick encounters a number of persons friendly to his cause, among whom are Pelayo, heir-apparent to the Gothic crown; Alphonso, fellow-prisoner of Pelayo at the Moorish court; Siverian, an old servant of his mother's house; and Florinda, daughter of Count Julian.

5. The heroic party set out on a pilgrimage to the mountains of Asturias.[1] Roderick and Siverian had gone before; the others follow in the disguise of peasants. Their midnight march in that superb climate is well described:—

> The favouring moon arose,
> To guide them on their flight through upland paths
> Remote from frequentage,[2] and dales retired,
> Forest and mountain glen. Before their feet
> The fire-flies, swarming in the woodland shade,
> Sprung up like sparks, and twinkled round their way:
> The timorous blackbird, starting at their step,
> Fled from the thicket, with shrill note of fear;
> And far below them in the peopled dell,
> When all the soothing sounds of eve had ceased,
> The distant watch-dog's voice at times was heard,
> Answering the nearer wolf. All through the night,
> Among the hills they travelled silently;
> Till when the stars were setting, at what hour[3]
> The breath of heaven is coldest, they beheld
> Within a lonely grove the expected fire,
> Where Roderick and his comrade anxiously
> Looked for the appointed meeting.
> Bright rose the flame replenished; it illumed

1 **Asturias,** in the north-west of Spain.
2 **Remote from frequentage,** far from frequented places; lonely.
3 **At what hour,** at the hour at which.

The cork-tree's furrowed rind, its rifts and swells
And redder scars,.....and where its aged boughs
O'erbowered the travellers, cast upon the leaves
A floating, gray, unrealizing[1] gleam.

6. While the rest sleep, Roderick and Florinda, little dreaming of each other's presence, are kept awake by bitter recollections. At last, awed by the sanctity of his air and raiment,[2] she kneels, and asks if he knows who the wretch is who thus grovels before him. He answers that he does not.

Then said she, "Here thou seest
One who is known too fatally for all,.....
The daughter of Count Julian!"
Well it was
For Roderick that no eye beheld him now!
From head to foot a sharper pang than death
Thrilled him; his heart, as at a mortal stroke,
Ceased from its functions; his breath failed.

The darkness and her own emotions prevent her, however, from observing him, and she proceeds:—

"Father!" at length she said, "all tongues amid
This general ruin shed their bitterness
On Roderick; load his memory with reproach,
And with their curses persecute his soul.".....
"Why shouldst thou tell me this?" exclaimed the Goth,
From his cold forehead wiping as he spake
The death-like moisture....."Why of Roderick's guilt
Tell me? Or thinkest thou I know it not?
Alas! who hath not heard the hideous tale
Of Roderick's shame?"

1 **Unrealizing**, a coined word, meaning "making them appear unreal."

2 **Raiment.** He is dressed as a pilgrim.

"There!" she cried,
Drawing her body backward where she knelt,
And stretching forth her arms with head upraised,
"There! it[1] pursues me still!.....I came to thee.
Father, for comfort—and thou heapest fire
Upon my head! But hear me patiently,
And let me undeceive thee. Self-abased,
Not to arraign another do I come;
I come a self-accuser, self-condemned,
To take upon myself the pain deserved."

7. Still utterly unconscious of her strange confessor, she goes on to explain herself:—

"I loved the king!
Tenderly, passionately—madly loved him!
Sinful it was to love a child of earth
With such entire devotion as I loved
Roderick, the heroic prince, the glorious Goth!
He was the sunshine of my soul! and like
A flower, I lived and flourished in his light.
Oh, bear not with me thus impatiently!
No tale of weakness this, that in the act
Of penitence, indulgent to itself,
With garrulous palliation half repeats
The sin it ill repents."

She expresses her conviction that the catastrophe was brought about, not by any premeditated guilt, but in a moment of delirium, which she had herself been instrumental in bringing on:—

"Here then, O father, at thy feet I own
Myself the guiltier; and full well I knew
These were his thoughts. But vengeance mastered me,
And in my agony I cursed the man
Whom I loved best."

1 It, my fate—to hear Roderick condemned.

"Dost thou recall that curse?"
Cried Roderick, in a deep and inward voice,
Still with his head depressed, and covering still
His countenance. "Recall it!" she exclaimed.
"Father! I came to thee because I gave
The reins to wrath too long,.....because I wrought
His ruin, death, and infamy.....O God,
Forgive the wicked vengeance thus indulged,
As I forgive the king!"

8. Count Julian is pierced with a mortal wound by a Moor. He thereupon exhorts his captains to rejoin the standard and the faith of their country; and then requests to be borne into a neighbouring church.

They raised him from the earth;
He, knitting as they lifted him his brow,
Drew in through open lips and teeth firm-closed
His painful breath, and on his lance laid hand
Lest its long shaft should shake the mortal wound.
Gently his men, with slow and steady step,
Their suffering brother bore: and in the church,
Before the altar, laid him down, his head
Upon Florinda's knees.

9. He then renounces the faith to which he had so long adhered, and reverently receives at Roderick's hand the sacrament of reconciliation and peace.

That dread office done,
Count Julian with amazement saw the priest
Kneel down before him. "By the sacrament
Which we have here partaken," Roderick cried,
"In this most awful moment; by that hope,
That holy faith which comforts thee in death,
Grant thy forgiveness, Julian, ere thou diest!

Behold the man who most hath injured thee!
Roderick, the wretched Goth, the guilty cause
Of all thy guilt,.....the unworthy instrument
Of thy redemption,.....kneels before thee here,
And prays to be forgiven!"
"Roderick!" exclaimed
The dying count,....."Roderick!" and from the floor.
With violent effort, half he raised himself;
The spear hung heavy in his side; and pain
And weakness overcame him, that[1] he fell
Back on his daughter's lap. "O Death," cried he,.....
Passing his hand across his cold damp brow,.....
"Thou tamest the strong limb, and conquerest
The stubborn heart! But yesterday, I said
One heaven could not contain mine enemy
And me; and now I lift my dying voice
To say, Forgive me, Lord! as I forgive
Him who hath done the wrong!" He closed his eyes
A moment; then with sudden impulse cried,.....
"Roderick, thy wife is dead!—the Church hath power
To free thee from thy vows! The broken heart
Might yet be healed, the wrong redressed, the throne
Rebuilt by that same hand which pulled it down."

He gives Roderick his hand in kindness, blesses and kisses his heroic daughter, and expires. The concluding lines are full of force and tenderness.

When from her father's body she arose,
Her cheek was flushed, and in her eyes there beamed
A wilder brightness. On the Goth she gazed;
While underneath the emotions of that hour
Exhausted life gave way. "O God!" she said,
Lifting her hands, "thou hast restored me all,.....

1 That, for "so that."

All.....in one hour!".....and round his neck she threw
Her arms, and cried, "My Roderick! mine in heaven!"
Groaning, he clasped her close; and in that act
And agony her happy spirit fled.[1]

10. Roderick at last recovers his good war-horse on the eve of a great battle with the infidels; and, bestriding him in his penitential robes, rushes furiously into the heart of the fight, where, kindling with the scene and the cause, he instinctively raises his ancient war-cry. "Roderick the Goth! Roderick and victory!" resounding over the astonished field, are taken up by his inspired followers, and animate them to the utter destruction of the enemy.

And in the heat of fight,
Rejoicing and forgetful of all else,
Set up his cry, as he was wont in youth,
"RODERICK THE GOTH!".....his war-cry known so well.
Pelayo eagerly took up the word,
And shouted out his kinsman's name beloved,
"Roderick the Goth! Roderick and victory!
Roderick and vengeance!" Odoar gave it forth;
Urban repeated it; and through his ranks
Count Pedro sent the cry. Not from the field
Of his great victory, when Witiza fell,
With louder acclamations had that name
Been borne abroad upon the winds of heaven.
O'er the field it spread,
All hearts and tongues uniting in the cry;
Mountains, and rocks, and vales re-echoed round,
And he, rejoicing in his strength, rode on,
Laying on[2] the Moors with that good sword, and smote,
And overthrew, and scattered, and destroyed,

1 **Her happy spirit fled.** This conclusion—the death of Florinda—gives the story more of a tragic turn than the reader expects. The marriage of Roderick and Florinda would have been a commonplace ending.

2 **Laying on,** smiting.

And trampled down! and still at every blow
Exultingly he sent the war-cry forth,
"Roderick the Goth! Roderick and victory!
Roderick and vengeance!"

11. At the close of the day, however, when the field is won, Orelio, the battle-horse, is found without its rider, and the sword which he wielded lying at its feet.

Upon the banks
Of Sella was Orelio found; his legs
And flanks incarnadined,[1] his poitral[2] smeared
With froth and foam and gore, his silver mane
Sprinkled with blood, which hung on every hair,
Aspersed[3] like dew-drops; trembling there he stood
From the toil of battle; and at times sent forth
His tremulous voice, far-echoing, loud, and shrill;
A frequent anxious cry,[4] with which he seemed
To call the master whom he loved so well,
And who had thus again forsaken him.
Siverian's helm and cuirass[5] on the grass
Lay near; and Julian's sword, its hilt and chain
Clotted with blood. But where was he whose hand
Had wielded it so well that glorious day?.....

Days, months, and years, and generations passed,
And centuries held their course, before, far off
Within a hermitage near Viseu's walls,
A humble tomb was found, which bore, inscribed
In ancient characters, King Roderick's name.

1 **Incarnadined,** dyed red.

2 **Poitral,** armour covering the breast of a horse.

3 **Aspersed,** scattered: the literal meaning of the word; but it is now used only in its secondary sense of slandered.

4 **A frequent anxious cry.** Sir Walter Scott says, in a note justifying the words, "Steeds that shriek in agony," in *The Lord of the Isles*, canto vi.: "It was my fortune, upon one occasion, to hear a horse, in a moment of agony, utter a thrilling scream, which I still consider the most melancholy sound I ever heard."

5 **Cuirass** (pron. *kwe-rass'*), a breast-plate. [Fr. *cuirasse.*] The accent properly falls on the second syllable. In the text, the rhythm requires it to be on the first, *kwe'ras.*

NIGHT IN THE DESERT.

[A fanciful picture of desert life, in which the beauty of night in the desert is contrasted with the unhappy lot of Zeinab, an Arab widow. She rises above her misfortunes and accepts the will of God.]

1. How beautiful is night![1]
A dewy freshness fills the silent air;
No mist obscures, nor cloud, nor speck, nor stain,
Breaks the serene of heaven:
In full-orbed glory, yonder moon divine
Rolls through the dark-blue depths.
Beneath her steady ray
The desert-circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky.
How beautiful is night!

2. Who, at this untimely hour,[2]
Wanders o'er the desert sands?
No station is in view,
Nor palm-grove islanded amid the waste.
The mother and her child,
The widowed mother and the fatherless boy,
They, at this untimely hour,
Wander o'er the desert sands.

3. Alas! the setting sun[3]
Saw Zeinab in her bliss
Hodeirah's wife beloved,
The fruitful mother late,
Whom, when the daughters of Arabia named,

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1 **How beautiful is night.** This stanza is the setting or framework of the picture.

2 **Who at this untimely hour.** The second stanza introduces the figures or characters of the picture — a widowed mother and her only surviving child, wandering unattended in the desert.

3 **The setting sun, etc.** In the evening Zeinab, the mother, had been a happy wife, surrounded by many children—"a fruitful mother late," or lately. Now she is a wretched widow, robbed of all her children but one; and with that one she wanders in the desert.

They wished their lot like hers:
She wanders o'er the desert sands
A wretched widow now,
The fruitful mother of so fair a race;
With only one preserved,
She wanders o'er the wilderness.

4. No tear relieved the burden of her heart;
Stunned with the heavy woe, she felt like one
Half-wakened from a midnight dream of blood,
But sometimes, when the boy
Would wet her hand with tears,
And, looking up to her fixed countenance,
Sob out the name of Mother, then did she
Utter a feeble groan.
At length, collecting,[1] Zeinab turned her eyes
To heaven, exclaiming: "Praised be the Lord!
He gave, he takes away![2]
The Lord our God is good!"

THE HOLLY TREE.

[The poet takes the holly tree as an emblem of an ideal character. How the idea is worked out is explained in the Notes.]

1. O reader! hast thou ever stood to see
The holly tree?
The eye that contemplates it, well perceives
Its glossy leaves
Ordered by an intelligence so wise
As might[3] confound the atheist's sophistries.[4]

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1 **Collecting**, gathering her wits together—realizing her position.

2 **He gave, he takes away.** In the end she submits herself to the will and the hand of God, saying with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job i. 21).

3 **As might**, "that it might."

4 **The atheist's sophistries**, the false reasoning of him who says that there is no God.

2. Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen
Wrinkled and keen;
No grazing cattle through their prickly round
Can reach to wound;[1]
But as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarmed the pointless leaves appear.

3. I love to view these things with curious eyes,
And moralize;
And, in this wisdom of the holly tree,
Can emblems see,
Wherewith, perchance, to make a pleasant rhyme,
One which may profit in the after-time.

4. Thus,[2] though abroad perchance I might appear
Harsh and austere,
To those who on my leisure would intrude
Reserved and rude,
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be
Like the high leaves upon the holly tree.

5. And should my youth,[3] as youth is apt, I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the holly tree.

6. And as, when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green,
The holly leaves a sober hue display
Less bright than they,

1 **Can reach to wound.** The prickly leaves low down guard the stem against the attacks of cattle.

2 **Thus.** Here begins the poet's application of the emblem of the holly tree to personal conduct. The poet may show a harsh and prickly front to strangers; but he wishes to appear gentle and smooth to his friends.

3 **And should my youth, etc.** The sharp leaves are an emblem of youth, the soft ones of old age.

But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the holly tree? 36

7. So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem amid the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age[1] as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the holly tree. 42

THE DEATH OF NELSON.

[The following passage is from Southey's "Life of Nelson." It is a good example of natural and simple, yet dignified, prose narrative. Paragraphs 1–10 tell the story of Nelson's death; paragraphs 11–16 exhibit the feelings which the event called forth, and the greatness of the national loss.]

1. It had been part of Nelson's prayer[2] that the British fleet might be distinguished by humanity in the victory which he expected. Setting an example himself, he twice gave orders to cease firing on the *Redoubtable*, supposing that she had struck, because her guns were silent; for, as she carried no flag, there was no means of instantly ascertaining the fact. From this ship, which he had thus twice spared, he received his death. A ball fired from her mizzen-top, which in the then situation of the two vessels was not more than fifteen yards from that part of the deck where he was standing, struck the epaulet on his left shoulder, about a quarter after one, just in the heat of action. He fell upon his face, on the spot which was covered with his poor secretary's blood.

2. Hardy, who was a few steps from him, turning round,

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1 **In my age.** In the two last stanzas a new idea is introduced. Not only does he wish that his age may be mellow, like the higher leaves of the holly; he also wishes that his old age may be fresh and green, like the evergreen holly in winter.

2 **Nelson's prayer.** Before engaging in battle at Trafalgar, Nelson, who had a presentiment of death as well as of victory, went into his cabin and wrote out a prayer, in which he committed himself and his cause to God.

saw three men raising him up. "They have done for me at last, Hardy," said he.—"I hope not," cried Hardy.—"Yes," he replied; "my backbone is shot through." Yet even now, not for a moment losing his presence of mind, he observed, as they were carrying him down the ladder, that the tiller-ropes,[1] which had been shot away, were not yet replaced, and ordered that new ones should be rove immediately; then, that he might not be seen by the crew, he took out his handkerchief, and covered his face and his stars. Had he but concealed these badges of honour from the enemy, England perhaps would not have had cause to receive with sorrow the news of the battle of Trafalgar.

3. The cock-pit[2] was crowded with wounded and dying men, over whose bodies he was with some difficulty conveyed, and laid[3] upon a pallet in the midshipmen's berth. It was soon perceived, upon examination, that the wound was mortal. This, however, was concealed from all except Captain Hardy, the chaplain, and the medical attendants. He himself being certain, from the sensation in his back and the gush of blood he felt momently within his breast, that no human care could avail him, insisted that the surgeon should leave him and attend to those to whom he might be useful: "for," said he, "you can do nothing for me."[4]

4. All that could be done was to fan him with paper, and frequently to give him lemonade to alleviate his intense thirst. He was in great pain, and expressed much anxiety for the event of the action, which now began to declare itself. As often as a ship struck, the crew of the *Victory* hurrahed; and at every hurrah a visible expression of joy gleamed in the eyes and marked the countenance of the dying hero. But he be-

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1 **Tiller-ropes**, ropes for turning the helm.

2 **The cock-pit**, the room for the wounded during an action.

3 **And laid, etc.** A faulty construction. It makes the phrase "over whose bodies" apply both to "he was conveyed" and "he was laid."

4 **You can do nothing for me.** This recalls the story of Sir Philip Sydney at Zutphen, when he passed a cup of water to a wounded soldier, saying, "Thy necessity is greater than mine."

came impatient to see Hardy; and as that officer, though often sent for, could not leave the deck, Nelson feared that some fatal cause prevented him, and repeatedly cried, "Will no one bring Hardy to me? He must be killed; he is surely dead!"

5. An hour and ten minutes elapsed from the time when Nelson received his wound before Hardy could come to him. They shook hands in silence, Hardy in vain struggling to suppress the feelings of that most painful and yet sublimest moment. "Well, Hardy," said Nelson, "how goes the day with us?"—"Very well," replied Hardy. "Ten ships have struck; but five of the van have tacked, and show an intention to bear down upon the *Victory*. I have called two or three of our fresh ships round, and have no doubt of giving them a drubbing."—"I hope," said Nelson, "none of our ships have struck?"—Hardy answered, "There was no fear of that."

6. Then, and not till then, Nelson spoke of himself. "I am a dead man, Hardy," said he. "I am going fast; it will be all over with me soon. Come nearer to me. Let my dear Lady Hamilton have my hair and all other things belonging to me." Hardy observed that he hoped Mr. Beatty[1] could yet hold out some prospect of life. "Oh no," he replied; "it is impossible. My back is shot through. Beatty will tell you so." Hardy then once more shook hands with him, and with a heart almost bursting hastened upon deck.

7. By this time all feeling below the breast was gone; and Nelson, having made the surgeon ascertain this, said to him, "You know I am gone. I know it. I feel something rising in my breast," putting his hand on his left side, "which tells me so." And upon Beatty's inquiring whether his pain was very great, he replied, "So great that he wished he was dead. Yet," said he in a lower voice, "one would like to live a little longer too."

8. Captain Hardy, some fifty minutes after he had left the cock-pit, returned; and, again taking the hand of his dying

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1 Mr. Beatty, the surgeon attending Nelson.

friend and commander, congratulated him on having gained a complete victory. How many of the enemy were taken he did not know, as it was impossible to perceive them distinctly; but fourteen or fifteen at least. "That's well," cried Nelson; "but I bargained for twenty." And then in a stronger voice he said, "Anchor, Hardy, anchor." Hardy, upon this, hinted that Admiral Collingwood would take upon himself the direction of affairs. "Not while I live, Hardy," said the dying Nelson, ineffectually endeavouring to raise himself from the bed; "do you anchor." His previous orders for preparing to anchor had shown how clearly he foresaw the necessity of this. Presently calling Hardy back, he said to him in a low voice, "Don't throw me overboard;" and he desired that he might be buried by his parents, unless it should please the king to order otherwise.

9. "Kiss me, Hardy," said he. Hardy knelt down and kissed his cheek; and Nelson said, "Now I am satisfied. Thank God, I have done my duty!" Hardy stood over him in silence for a moment or two, then knelt again and kissed his forehead. "Who is that?" said Nelson; and being informed he replied, "God bless you, Hardy." And Hardy then left him for ever.

10. Nelson now desired to be turned upon his right side, and said, "I wish I had not left the deck, for I shall soon be gone." Death was, indeed, rapidly approaching. He said to the chaplain, "Doctor, I have *not* been a *great* sinner;" and after a short pause, "Remember that I leave Lady Hamilton and my daughter Horatia as a legacy to my country." His articulation now became difficult; but he was distinctly heard to say, "Thank God, I have done my duty!" These words he repeatedly pronounced; and they were the last words which he uttered. He expired at thirty minutes after four —three hours and a quarter after he had received his wound.

11. The death of Nelson was felt in England as something

more than a public calamity ;[1] men started at the intelligence, and turned pale, as if they had heard of the loss of a dear friend. An object of our admiration and affection, of our pride and of our hopes, was suddenly taken from us ; and it seemed as if we had never till then known how deeply we loved and reverenced him. What the country had lost in its great naval hero—the greatest of our own and of all former times—was scarcely taken into the account of grief.[2]

12. So perfectly, indeed,[3] had he performed his part that the maritime war, after the battle of Trafalgar, was considered at an end. The fleets of the enemy were not merely defeated, but destroyed ; new navies must be built, and a new race of seamen reared for them, before the possibility of their invading our shores could again be contemplated. It was not, therefore, from any selfish reflection upon the magnitude of our loss that we mourned for him ; the general sorrow was of a higher character.

13. The people of England[4] grieved that funeral ceremonies and public monuments and posthumous rewards were all which they could bestow upon him whom the king, the legislature, and the nation would have alike delighted to honour ; whom every tongue would have blessed ; whose presence in every village through which he might have passed would have wakened the church-bells, have given schoolboys a holiday, have drawn children from their sports to gaze upon him, and "old men from the chimney-corner" to look upon Nelson ere they died.

14. The victory of Trafalgar[5] was celebrated, indeed, with

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1 **A public calamity.** Notice that up to this paragraph, Southey has confined himself to recording in the simplest form, and as nearly as possible in the words of eye-witnesses, the events of the day, and the last words of Nelson. At paragraph 11, reflection is introduced, and is continued till the end of the passage.

2 **Was scarcely taken into the account,** because the personal loss was most deeply felt.

3 **So perfectly, indeed.** This paragraph is suggested by the words, "What the country had lost." And the national loss is shown by exhibiting the greatness of the victory.

4 **The people of England, etc.** This paragraph again lays stress on the personal affection of the people for Nelson.

5 **The victory of Trafalgar.** The author here reverts to the national view of the victory and of Nelson's death.

the usual forms of rejoicing, but they were without joy; for such already was the glory of the British navy, through Nelson's surpassing genius, that it scarcely seemed to receive any addition from the most signal victory that ever was achieved upon the seas; and the destruction of this mighty fleet, by which all the maritime schemes of France were totally frustrated, hardly appeared to add to our security or strength; for while Nelson was living to watch the combined squadrons of the enemy, we felt ourselves as secure as now, when they were no longer in existence.

15. There was reason to suppose, from the appearances upon opening his body, that in the course of nature he might have attained, like his father, to a good old age. Yet he cannot be said to have fallen prematurely whose work was done; nor ought he to be lamented who died so full of honours and at the height of human fame.

16. The most triumphant death[1] is that of the martyr; the most awful, that of the martyred patriot; the most splendid, that of the hero in the hour of victory: and if the chariot and the horses of fire had been vouchsafed for Nelson's translation, he could scarcely have departed in a brighter blaze of glory. He has left us, not indeed his mantle of inspiration, but a name and an example which are at this hour inspiring thousands of the youth of England—a name which is our pride, and an example which will continue to be our shield and our strength. Thus it is that the spirits of the great and the wise continue to live and to act after them.

WESLEY'S OLD AGE AND DEATH.

[This simple and touching account of the last days of John Wesley is from Southey's "Life" of the great Methodist.

John Wesley was born at Epworth in 1703. While he and his brother Charles were at Oxford, they, in 1730, formed with a few other students a

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1 **The most triumphant death.** Here the narrative reaches its climax. The paragraph is one of the finest pieces of eulogium in the English language. It is poetry in prose.

small society for religious exercises. After a short stay in America, John returned to England, which was then deeply moved (1738) by the preaching of Whitfield. Wesley then became more earnest, and travelled over England preaching to vast audiences in meeting-houses. This he continued till the end of his life. The name "Methodists" was at first applied to him and his followers in ridicule; but it was afterwards adopted by them. John Wesley died in 1791; Charles in 1788.]

1. "Leisure and I," said Wesley, "have taken leave of one another. I propose to be as busy as long as I live, if my health is so long indulged to me." This resolution was made in the prime of life, and never was resolution more punctually observed. "Lord, let me not live to be useless," was the prayer which he uttered after seeing one whom he had long known as an active and useful magistrate reduced by age to be "a picture of human nature in disgrace, feeble in body and mind, slow of speech and understanding."

2. He was favoured[1] with a constitution vigorous beyond that of ordinary men, and with an activity of spirit which is even rarer than his singular felicity of health and strength. Ten thousand cares of various kinds, he said, were no more weight or burden to his mind than ten thousand hairs were to his head. But, in truth, his only cares were those of superintending the work of his ambition, which continually prospered under his hands. Real cares he had none; no anxieties, no sorrows, no griefs which touched him to the quick.

3. His manner of life was the most favourable that could have been devised for longevity. He rose early, and lay down at night with nothing to keep him waking or trouble him[2] in sleep. His mind was always in a pleasurable and wholesome state of activity; he was temperate in his diet, and lived in perpetual locomotion; and frequent change of air[3] is perhaps, of all things, that which most conduces to joyous health and long life.

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1 **He was favoured, etc.** This is admirably expressed.

2 **Or trouble him,** should have been, "Or *to* trouble him." Southey is habitually careless in failing to repeat these particles of speech – prepositions and conjunctions.

3 **Frequent change of air.** This general reflection, added to those specially applicable to Wesley, spoils the unity of the sentence.

4. Upon his eighty-sixth birth-day he says: "I now find I grow old. My sight is decayed, so that I cannot read a small print, unless in a strong light. My strength is decayed, so that I walk much slower than I did some years since. My memory of names, whether of persons or places, is decayed, till I stop a little to recollect them. What I should be afraid of is, if I took thought for the morrow, that my body should weigh down my mind, and create either stubbornness, by the decrease of my understanding, or peevishness, by the increase of bodily infirmities. But thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God!"

5. His strength now diminished so much that he found it difficult to preach more than twice a day; and for many weeks he abstained from his five o'clock morning sermons, because a slow and settled fever parched his mouth. Finding himself a little better, he resumed the practice, and hoped to hold on a little longer; but at the beginning of the year 1790 he writes: "I am now an old man, decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim;[1] my right hand shakes much; my mouth is hot and dry every morning; I have a lingering fever almost every day; my motion is weak and slow. However, blessed be God, I do not slack my labours; I can preach and write still."

6. In the middle of the same year he closed his cash account-book with the following words, written with a tremulous hand, so as to be scarcely legible: "For upwards of eighty-six years I have kept my accounts exactly; I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the continual conviction that I save all I can, and give all I can—that is, all I have." His strength was now quite gone, and no glasses could help his sight. "But I feel no pain," he says, "from head to foot; only, it seems, nature is exhausted, and, humanly speaking, will sink more and more, till

'The weary springs of life stand still at last.'"

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1 **My eyes are dim.** The charm of the narrative lies in its careful attention to minute details.

7. On the 1st of February 1791, he wrote his last letter to America. It shows how anxious he was that his followers should consider themselves as one united body. "See," said he, "that you never give place to one thought of separating from your brethren in Europe. Lose no opportunity of declaring to all men that the Methodists are one people in all the world, and that it is their full determination so to continue." He expressed also a sense that his hour was almost come. "Those that desire to write," said he, "or say anything to me, have no time to lose; for '*time hath shaken me by the hand, and death is not far behind,*'"—words which his father had used in one of the last letters that he addressed to his sons at Oxford.

8. On the 17th of that month he took cold after preaching at Lambeth. For some days he struggled against an increasing fever, and continued to preach till the Wednesday following, when he delivered his last sermon. From that time he became daily weaker and more lethargic, and on the 2nd of March he died in peace; being in the eighty-eighth year of his age, and the sixty-fifth of his ministry.

9. During his illness he said, "Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen; and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the chapel." Some years before, he had prepared a vault for himself, and for those itinerant preachers who might die in London. In his will he directed that six poor men should have twenty shillings each for carrying his body to the grave. "For I particularly desire," said he, "there may be no hearse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp, except the tears of them that loved me, and are following me to Abraham's bosom. I solemnly adjure my executors, in the name of God, punctually to observe this."

10. At the desire of many of his friends his body was carried into the chapel the day preceding the interment; and they lay[1] in a kind of state becoming the person—dressed in his clerical habit, with gown, cassock, and bands; the old clerical cap on

1 **They lay.** "It lay"—namely, the body.

his head, a Bible in one hand, and a white handkerchief in the other. The face was placid, and the expression which death had fixed upon his venerable features was that of a serene and heavenly smile.

11. The crowds who flocked[1] to see him were so great that it was thought prudent, for fear of accidents, to accelerate the funeral, and perform it between five and six in the morning. The intelligence, however, could not be kept entirely secret, and several hundred persons attended at that unusual hour. Mr. Richardson, who performed the service, had been one of his preachers almost thirty years. When he came to that part of his service, "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our dear *brother*," his voice changed, and he substituted the word *father*; and the feeling with which he did this was such that the congregation, who were shedding silent tears, burst at once into loud weeping.

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1 **The crowds who flocked,** should be, "The crowds *that* flocked." "Crowds" is a neuter noun; but Southey was thinking of the persons that formed the crowds. Southey makes the same pardonable blunder in connection with the word "congregation" in the close of the paragraph.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

1. Wordsworth was the great master of the Lake School, in which Coleridge and Southey were, after him, the most prominent members. The poets of that school took their subjects often from among the commonest things, and wrote their poems in the simplest style, choosing the ordinary speech of educated Englishmen as the vehicle of their thoughts. The "Lakists" probably went too far in their disdain for the conventional subjects and ornaments of poetry, but their principles were sound and healthful, and their labours made a deep and lasting impression on English thought.

2. William Wordsworth was born on the 7th of April 1770, at Cockermouth, in Cumberland, where his father, John Wordsworth, was a law agent. Both father and mother died while the poet was yet a boy; and when his school education was considered to be sufficiently advanced, he was sent in 1787 to St. John's College, Cambridge. There, during the four years of his undergraduate course, he read a good deal, studied Italian, and wrote poetry; but he thought and felt the course of study to be narrow and irksome.

3. Right welcome, therefore, were the vacations, which released him from its bonds. Then it was his delight to go on tours on the Continent; that in the autumn of 1790 being directed to Switzerland and France, although the tempest of Revolution was then raging with great

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

fury. In the following year, having graduated, he went again to France, with a soul on fire in her cause. There he stayed for fifteen months, and there he might have perished by the guillotine had not his return to England in 1792 changed the current of his life.

4. His friends wished him to enter the Church; but he was born to be a poet and nothing else. The love of poetry was the grand passion of his heart. It grew and strengthened with the coming of maturer years, while the flame of republicanism wasted, and at last died.

5. He made his first public appearance as a poet in 1793, when he published a modest volume entitled, *Descriptive Sketches*. This was followed in the same year by *An Evening Walk*. These poems revealed to thoughtful minds the rise of a new star in the poetical heavens, which was destined to shed a brilliant lustre on

the land. Coleridge, a kindred spirit, was specially struck with their merits.

6. The need of earning a livelihood had turned Wordsworth's thoughts to the study of law and to the career of a journalist. Before he had settled anything, a young friend named Raisley Calvert died (1795), leaving him £900, with a pressing request that he would devote himself to poetry. That Wordsworth resolved to do.

7. Settling in Dorsetshire with his sister Dorothy, he wrote *Salisbury Plain*, and a tragedy called *The Borderers*, which he failed to get put on the stage. Soon afterwards he made the acquaintance of Coleridge; and when the latter took up house at Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, Wordsworth removed to Alfoxden, three miles off, in order to be near his new friend. The result of this alliance was the publication of a joint-volume of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, to which Wordsworth contributed twenty-two poems, and Coleridge one—*The Ancient Mariner*. The volume fell all but dead from the press.

8. After a tour in Germany, Wordsworth settled with his sister in a cottage at Grasmere, in Cumberland, where he spent the next nine years. There he married Mary Hutchinson (1802), the "phantom of delight;" and there he began his great philosophical poem, *The Excursion*. His mind was relieved from anxiety about money matters by the payment to his family of a debt due to their father by the late Earl of Lonsdale. This settlement yielded £1,800 each to Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy. The young earl became the fast friend of the poet, who afterwards dedicated to him his masterpiece—*The Excursion*.

9. After a short residence at Allan Bank, he removed in 1813 to Rydal Mount, in sight of those sweet lakes,

and under the shadow of those old hills, which have become inseparably associated with his name. In that well-known "cottage-like building, almost hidden by a profusion of roses and ivy," from whose grassy lawn a silver gleam of Windermere could be caught, the poet spent the greater part of his long life. About the same time he received, through the influence of his friend Lord Lonsdale, the office of Distributer of Stamps for the county of Westmoreland, with a salary of £500 and no very heavy duties attached to it.

10. In the following year (1814) *The Excursion* was published. It brought its author very little money, if any, and a good deal of abuse. "This will never do," was the verdict of Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh;* but it has been "doing" ever since, making its way steadily upward, like a star that climbs into the clear sky above the clouds and haze of the horizon.

11. *The Excursion* is only a fragment—a part of a vast moral epic to have been called *The Recluse*, in which the poet intended to discuss the human soul in its deepest workings and its loftiest relations. Its original unpopularity must be ascribed in part to the absence of dramatic life and the want of human interest, and in part to the novelty of embodying metaphysical reasoning in blank verse. Even now, though Wordsworth's popularity has grown immensely, *The Excursion* is read by few. Yet it is not all a web of subtile reasoning, for there are rich studies from nature and from life scattered plentifully over its more thoughtful ground-work.

12. The chief remaining works of this great writer are, *The White Doe of Rylstone* (1815), a tragic tale founded on the ruin of a northern family in the Rising of 1569; *Peter Bell* (1819), a remarkable specimen of the Lake school, which he dedicated to Southey;

Sonnets on the River Duddon; The Waggoner, dedicated to Charles Lamb; *Memorials of a Tour on the Continent; Ecclesiastical Sonnets; Yarrow Revisited, and other Poems;* and *The Prelude,* a fragment of autobiography, describing the growth of a poet's mind, but not published till the author was dead.

13. By many readers—probably by most—Wordsworth is best known and most highly prized on account of his minor poems, which display his genius in its simple beauty and unaffected grace. Such are *Ruth,* a touching tale of love and madness; *We are Seven,* a glimpse of that higher wisdom which the lips of childhood often utter; the classic *Laodamia,* clear-lined and graceful as an antique cameo; and the *Lines on Revisiting the Wye,* which are so rich in the calmly-eloquent philosophy that formed the ground-work of all he wrote.

14. In 1842, the old man, then past seventy, resigned his public office to his son, and received a pension of £300 a year. In 1843, on the death of his friend Southey, he succeeded to the laureateship. Seven years later he sank into the grave, dying a few days after completing his eightieth year (April 23, 1850). His remains were laid in the churchyard of Grasmere, beside those of his beloved daughter, who had been taken from him three years before. Alfred Tennyson succeeded him as poet-laureate.

SUMMARY OF WORDSWORTH'S LIFE AND WORKS.

Year.	Age.	
1770		Born at Cockermouth, April 7.
1778	8	Goes to Hawkshead School, in Lancashire.
1787	17	Goes to St. John's College, Cambridge.
1790	20	Tour in Switzerland and France.

Year. Age.

1791...21...Takes B.A. degree—Goes to France again: his Revolutionary period.

1792...22...Returns to England.

1793...23...Publishes the *Evening Walk*, and *Descriptive Sketches*.

1795...25...Raisley Calvert bequeaths to him £900—Settles at Racedown, Dorsetshire, with his sister Dorothy.

1796...26...Writes *Salisbury Plain*, and *The Borderers*, a tragedy.

1797...27...Meeting with Coleridge—Goes to live at Alfoxden, Somersetshire.

1798...28...Publishes, with Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*—Tour in Germany.

1799...29...Goes to live at Grasmere.

1800...30...Publishes second volume of *Lyrical Ballads*.

1802...32...Earl of Lonsdale pays his father's debt: £1,800 each to W. and his sister—W. marries Mary Hutchinson—Begins *The Excursion*—Writes *Sonnet to Milton*.

1803...33...Tour in Scotland, with Dorothy—Writes *Yarrow Unvisited*.

1804...34...Visits Sir Walter Scott.

1805...35...Visited by Scott.

1807...37...Writes *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*.

1813...43...Receives the office of Distributer of Stamps (£500 a year)—Removes to Rydal Mount.

1814...44...Publishes *The Excursion*—Writes *Yarrow Visited*.

1815...45...Publishes *The White Doe of Rylstone*.

1819...49...Publishes *Peter Bell* and other poems.

1831...61...Farewell visit to Scott at Abbotsford—*Yarrow Revisited*.

1839...69...LL.D., Oxford.

1842...72...Retires from Distributership of Stamps—Government pension of £300 a year.

1843...73...Poet Laureate, in succession to Southey.

1847...77...Death of his daughter Dora (Mrs. Quillinan).

1850...80...Dies, April 23rd—Buried at Grasmere.

SELECTIONS FROM WORDSWORTH.

THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE.[1]

[The story is told to account for the presence every Sunday of a white doe in the churchyard of Bolton Priory, Yorkshire. It used to accompany its mistress to church while she lived, and it has continued to take the same walk since her death. She was Emily Norton, the last survivor of a family which was ruined by taking part in a Catholic rebellion against Queen Elizabeth in 1569. The father and eight sons were executed at York, and a ninth son was killed soon afterwards by a party of the Queen's horse. The poem is characterized by great simplicity both of thought and of language.]

1. A beautiful white doe is in the habit of repairing every Sunday to the churchyard of Bolton Priory[2] while the congregation has assembled for worship.

Right across the verdant sod,
Towards the very house of God,
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
Comes gliding in serene and slow,
Soft and silent as a dream,
A solitary doe![3]
White she is as lily of June,
And beauteous as the silver moon
When out of sight the clouds are driven,
And she[4] is left alone in heaven.

2. The mothers point out this pretty creature to their children, and tell them in sweet nursery phrases—

"Now you have seen the famous doe!

---

1 The prose abstract, by which the poetical quotations are woven together, is from Lord Jeffrey's Essays.

2 **Bolton Priory,** near Skipton, in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

3 **A solitary doe.** Not only a doe without other deer, but a doe without any attendant whatever. Notice the structure of the poem: first the doe is introduced, then the story is told to account for the coming of the doe.

4 **She,** the moon.

From Rylstone[1] she hath found her way
Over the hills this Sabbath-day;
Her work, whate'er it be, is done,
And she will depart when we are gone."

3. The incidents of the story are next described in the poem. They arose out of the short-lived Catholic insurrection of the northern counties in the reign of Elizabeth, which was supposed to be connected with the project of marrying the Queen of Scots to the Duke of Norfolk;[2] and terminated in the ruin of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland,[3] by whom it was chiefly abetted.

It was the time when England's queen
Twelve years had reigned, a sovereign dread;
Nor yet the restless crown had been
Disturbed upon her virgin head;
But now the inly-working[4] North
Was ripe to send its vassals forth,
A potent vassalage, to fight
In Percy's and in Neville's[5] right,
Two earls fast leagued in discontent,
Who gave their wishes open vent,
And boldly urged a general plea,—
The rites of ancient piety
To be by force of arms renewed;
Glad prospect for the multitude!
And that same banner,[6] on whose breast
The blameless lady had expressed

1 **Rylstone,** Rylstone Hall, in Yorkshire, then the seat of Richard Norton.

2 **Norfolk.** In 1569 he was imprisoned, but was released on promising to give up the design of marrying Mary. Two years later he renewed his plot for the release of Mary, and he was executed in 1572.

3 **Northumberland and Westmoreland.** Northumberland (Thomas Percy), after being imprisoned for nearly three years, was beheaded at York (August 1572). Westmoreland (Charles Neville) escaped to the Netherlands, and his estates were forfeited.

4 **Inly-working,** plotting; scheming.

5 **Percy** and **Neville,** Northumberland and Westmoreland.

6 **Banner.** The "Banner of the Five Wounds"—those on Christ's body—was that under which the rebels gathered.

Memorials chosen to give life
And sunshine to a dangerous strife,—
This banner, waiting for the call,
Stood quietly in Rylstone Hall.

4. Among the victims of this rash enterprise was Richard Norton of Rylstone, who comes to the array with a splendid banner at the head of eight tall sons, but against the will and advice of a ninth (Francis), who, though he refused to join the host, yet follows unarmed in its rear, out of anxiety for the fate of his family. The father

Then seized the staff, and thus did say:
"Thou, Richard, bear'st thy father's name,
Keep thou this ensign till the day
When I of thee require the same;
Thy place be[1] on my better hand;
And seven as true as thou I see
Will cleave to this good cause and me."
He spake, and eight brave sons straightway
All followed him, a gallant band!

5. They make a rash attempt on Barnard Castle,[2] are all made prisoners, and forwarded to York for trial. At the execution of his father and his brothers, Francis, the ninth son, recovers the fatal banner.

"The unhappy banner Francis saw,
And with a look of calm command,
Inspiring universal awe,
He took it from the soldier's hand;
And all the people that were round
Confirmed the deed in peace profound.

1 **Thy place be.** An example of the third person of the imperative mood, for "thy place *shall* be," or "*let* thy place be." Notice the great number of monosyllables used in these lines, and its effect in producing simplicity.

2 **Barnard Castle,** a town 21 miles south-west of Durham; partly in Durham and partly in Yorkshire.

High transport did the father shed[1]
Upon his son—and they were led,
Led on, and yielded up their breath,
Together died a happy death!
But Francis, soon as he had braved
This insult and the banner saved,
That moment, from among the tide
Of the spectators, occupied
In admiration or dismay,
Bore unobserved his charge away!"

6. Francis is afterwards slain by a party of the Queen's horse near Bolton Priory, in which place he had been ordered to deposit the banner by the dying voice of his father.

He from the beaten road
Retreated toward a brake of thorn
Which like a place of vantage showed;
And there stood bravely, though forlorn.
In self-defence, with a warrior's brow,
He stood, nor weaponless was now;
He from a soldier's hand had snatched
A spear, and with his eyes he watched[2]
Their motions, turning round and round;
His weaker hand the banner held:
And straight, by savage zeal impelled,
Forth rushed a pikeman, as if he,
Not without harsh indignity,
Would seize the same: instinctively,[3]
To smite the offender with his lance,
Did Francis from the brake advance;

---

1 **High transport did the father shed.** Rather an obscure expression. It means that the father was in ecstasy when he saw his son take the banner.

2 **With his eyes he watched.** An instance of redundancy: he could not watch them but with his eyes.

3 **Indignity .... instinctively.** A bad rhyme. The accented syllables ought to rhyme; for example, "malig'nity" would rhyme well with "indig'nity."

But from behind a treacherous wound
Unfeeling brought him to the ground,—
A mortal stroke;—oh, grief to tell!
Thus, thus the noble Francis fell:
There did he lie, of breath forsaken;
The banner from his grasp was taken,
And borne exultingly away;
And the body was left on the ground where
it lay.[1]

7. The stately halls and pleasant bowers of Rylstone are then wasted, and fall into desolation; while Emily Norton, the heroic daughter, and only survivor of the house, is sheltered among its faithful retainers, and wanders about for many years in its neighbourhood, accompanied by a white doe which had formerly been a pet in the family.

That day, the first of a reunion
Which was to teem with high communion,
That day of balmy April weather,
They tarried in the wood together.

8. After the death of Emily, her faithful companion is seen

Haunting the spots with lonely cheer
Which her dear mistress once held dear:
Loves most what Emily loved most—
The enclosure of this churchyard ground;
Here wanders like a gliding ghost,
And every Sabbath here is found.

---

1 **And the body, etc.** This line consists of four anapæsts, in place of four iambuses. Scan thus:—

And the bod	y was left	on the ground	where it lay.
s s a	s s a	s s a	s s a

YARROW UNVISITED.

1803.

[Yarrow is a beautiful pastoral valley in Selkirkshire, watered by the river Yarrow, a tributary of the Ettrick, which falls into the Tweed. Yarrow is famous in the romantic history of the Scottish Border as the scene of some of the finest ballads—for example, "The Border Widow," "The Douglas Tragedy," "The Dowie Dens o' Yarrow," "Willie's drowned in Yarrow," and Hamilton's more modern ballad beginning,—

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow."

Wordsworth knew Yarrow only from these poems when he wrote the following verses. The main idea of the poem is that the poet would rather not destroy the vision of Yarrow in his mind by becoming acquainted with the reality.

"For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow."

Yarrow and Ettrick were once covered by the forest of Ettrick, famed for its bowmen in Border warfare. That is the forest celebrated in Jane Elliot's well-known song referring to the disaster of Flodden—"The Flowers of the Forest"—beginning,—

"I've heard the lilting at our yowe-milking."]

From Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled;
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled;
And, when we came to Clovenford,[1]
Then said my "*winsome Marrow*,"[2]
"Whate'er betide, we'll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow."

"Let Yarrow folk *frae* Selkirk town,[3]
Who have been buying, selling,

1 **Clovenford**, now Clovenfords, a village on the old highway between Scotland and England, on the Caddon, which joins the Tweed about a mile below Ashestiel, where Sir Walter Scott went to live in 1804. The house in which Wordsworth and his sister lived for a short time in Clovenfords is still pointed out. Yarrow is five miles across the hills southward from Clovenfords.

2 **Winsome Marrow**, lovely companion. *Winsome* is winning or attractive. The words are quoted from Hamilton's ballad. Wordsworth's "winsome Marrow" on that occasion was his sister Dorothy.

3 **Yarrow folk frae Selkirk town**, Yarrow folk who have gone to Selkirk for their marketing.

Go back to Yarrow, 'tis their own,
Each maiden to her dwelling!
On Yarrow's banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow!
But we will downwards with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

"There's Gala Water,[1] Leader Haughs,[2]
Both lying right before us;
And Dryburgh,[3] where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus;
There's pleasant Teviotdale,[4] a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow:
Why throw away a needful day,
To go in search of Yarrow?

"What's Yarrow but a river bare,
That glides the dark hills under?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder."

Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn;
My true love sighed for sorrow;
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow?

"Oh, green," said I, "are Yarrow's holms,[5]
And sweet is Yarrow flowing!
'Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,'[6]
But we will leave it growing.

---

1 **Gala Water**, a tributary of the Tweed, on which Galashiels stands. Wordsworth alludes to the song, "Braw, braw lads of Gala Water."

2 **Leader Haughs**, the meadows beside the river Leader, on which Lauder stands, another tributary of the Tweed.

3 **Dryburgh**, Dryburgh Abbey, on the Tweed below Melrose. There Scott was afterwards buried.

4 **Teviotdale**, the valley of the Teviot in Roxburghshire.

5 **Holms**, meadows by the river banks.

6 **Fair hangs the apple, etc.** A quotation from Hamilton's ballad.

O'er hilly path, and open strath,
We'll wander Scotland thorough;
But, though so near, we will not turn
Into the dale of Yarrow.

"Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow;
The swan on still Saint Mary's lake[1]
Float double, swan and shadow!
We will not see them, will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow;
Enough that in our hearts we know
There's such a place as Yarrow.

"Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!
It must, or we shall rue it:
We have a vision of our own,
Ah! why should we undo it?
The treasured dreams of times long past
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow!
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow.

"If care with freezing years should come,
And wandering seem but folly—
Should we be loath to stir from home,
And yet be melancholy;
Should life be dull, and spirits low,
'Twill soothe us in our sorrow
That earth has something yet to show—
The bonny holms of Yarrow!"

1 **Saint Mary's lake,** a beautiful lakelet near the head of the vale of Yarrow.

YARROW VISITED.

SEPTEMBER 1814.

[Eleven years after writing the previous poem, Wordsworth did visit Yarrow, under the guidance of James Hogg, "the Ettrick Shepherd;" and he did not regret the experiment. The reality was even finer than his vision—

> "Thou, that didst appear so fair
> To fond Imagination,
> Dost rival in the light of day
> Her delicate creation;"

and he enjoys the picture all the more that the sunshine of Fancy still plays upon it.

Wordsworth visited Yarrow again in 1831, when he wrote *Yarrow Revisited* —"a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other friends, visiting the banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford for Naples."]

And this is Yarrow?—*this* the stream
Of which my fancy cherished,
So faithfully, a waking dream?
An image that hath perished!
Oh, that some minstrel's harp were near,
To utter notes of gladness,
And chase this silence from the air,
That fills my heart with sadness!

Yet why?—a silvery current flows
With uncontrolled meanderings;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
Is visibly delighted;
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.[1]

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow Vale,
Save where that pearly whiteness

1 **Is in the mirror slighted.** The reflection in the lake of the surrounding hills is as perfect as the hills themselves.

Is round the rising sun diffused,
A tender hazy brightness;
Mild dawn of promise! that excludes
All profitless dejection;
Though not unwilling here t' admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding?
His bed[1] perchance was yon smooth mound
On which the herd is feeding:
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The water-wraith ascended thrice,
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the lay that sings
The haunts of happy lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers:
And pity sanctifies the verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love;—
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow!

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond Imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation:
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy;
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

1 His bed. Wordsworth alludes to the hero of the ballad, "Willie's drowned in Yarrow"

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature:
And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary!
The shattered front of Newark's towers,[1]
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in,
For manhood to enjoy his strength,
And age to wear away in!
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
It promises protection
To studious ease, and generous cares,
And every chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,
The wild wood's fruits to gather,
And on my true love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather!
And what if I enwreathed my own!
'Twere no offence to reason;
The sober hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see; but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee;

1 **The shattered front of Newark's towers.** The ruin of Newark Castle stands in the midst of woods beside the Yarrow, a short way above its junction with the Ettrick. The New-wark was built by James II. in place of the Old-wark built by Alexander III. It was the residence of Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth, widow of the Duke of Monmouth, beheaded in 1685. Scott also refers to the position of Newark in the midst of "lofty groves."

"He passed where Newark's stately tower
Looks out from Yarrow's birchen bower."
Lay of the Last Minstrel.

A ray of Fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee.
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure.

The vapours linger round the heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought! which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow!
Will dwell with me, to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

[This poem has been called "a manual of greatness," so admirably does it describe and condense the qualities that go to the making of a noble character. The poem was written in 1806, soon after the death of Lord Nelson, whom Wordsworth greatly admired and whose character suggested many points in the description of the "happy warrior." But while the "warrior" is to be taken in the first instance in a literal sense—as applied to a great soldier or a great sailor—many of the thoughts of the poem are equally applicable to him who tries worthily to fight the battle of life in any field.]

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is He
That every Man in arms[1] should wish to be?
—It is the generous spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan[2] that pleased his childish thought:
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright:

1 **Man in arms**, soldier or sailor.
2 **Hath wrought upon the plan**, has striven to realize in life the ideals formed in the mind of youth.

Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,[1]
But makes his moral being his prime care:
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed,—miserable train!—
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power[2]
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good[3] receives;
By objects which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling,[4] rendered more compassionate;
Is placable[5]—because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more;[6] more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.[7]
—'Tis He whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state[8] where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labours good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:

1 **Stops not there,** is not satisfied with intellectual progress merely, but cultivates his moral nature also.

2 **A power**—namely, moral courage.

3 **Their good,** their good influence.

4 **To abate her feeling.** Some natures are hardened by the frequent sight of suffering and disease; not so the happy warrior. He becomes more pitiful.

5 **Placable,** forgiving.

6 **As tempted more,** the better able to exercise self-restraint, because he has been often tempted.

7 **More alive to tenderness,** more inclined to sympathize with other sufferers, because he himself has suffered. This differs from the "more compassionate" of line 20, where the pity arises from the sight of suffering in others: here it arises from the experience of suffering in himself.

8 **In a state, etc.,** in circumstances in which one is tempted to do a small evil in order to prevent a greater.

—Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire:
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state;
Whom they must follow;[1] on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers[2] shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a Lover; and attired
With sudden brightness,[3] like a Man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law[4]
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or, if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
—He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To home-felt pleasures[5] and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,[6]
Are at his heart; and such fidelity

1 **Whom they must follow, etc.** To whom wealth, honours, or high position must come without his seeking for them; on whose head *they* must fall like showers of manna—that is, from heaven.

2 **Powers,** personal qualities or character.

3 **Attired with sudden brightness, etc.** A reference to the last hours of Admiral Lord Nelson. See the extract from Southey, p. 233.

4 **Keeps the law,** holds to the rule of life.

5 **Leans to home-felt pleasures.** Another reference to Lord Nelson—to his well-known love of home and nature, and to his tenderness, like that of a woman.

6 **Wheresoe'er he be.** Even in the midst of battle, as was the case with Nelson.

It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love.
—'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,[1]—
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value[2] must be won;
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpassed:
Who,—whether praise[3] of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead, unprofitable name,—
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause:—
This is the happy Warrior; this is He
Whom every Man in arms should wish to be.

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

[The "Phantom of delight" was Mary Hutchinson, whom Wordsworth married in 1802. The three stanzas describe three views of a woman's character;—the first, a superficial view, in which external charms are the main attraction; the second, a "nearer view," in which the activities and energies of the daughter are made apparent in connection with household life; the

1 **To his wish or not,** a lot accordant to his wish, or not accordant to his wish. "To his wish" is an attribute to "lot."

2 **What he most doth value.** Not what is most pleasant, or what is most comfortable, but what is most profitable.

3 **Who, whether praise, etc.,** who is equally indifferent to fame and to oblivion, and values the approval of God more than the praise of man.

third, the closest view of all, in which the inward character of the woman as wife and mother are realized, though the "spirit" view is not lost.]

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament:
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair,
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time[1] and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;[2]
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller betwixt life and death;[3]
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

1 **From May-time**, from holiday time and time of merry-making.

2 **Pulse of the machine**, the woman's [heart.

3 **A traveller betwixt life and death**, realizing life as a preparation for immortality.

LUCY.

[This little poem is a good illustration of Wordsworth's theory, that the simplest things in nature might be the theme of poetry, and that it might express itself in the words of common speech. Lucy is a rustic girl living on a lonely moor and with few friends, yet there is one heart that was made desolate by her death. The images used in the poem are of the simplest kind—a solitary violet, and a lonely star.]

1. She dwelt among the untrodden ways
   Beside the springs of Dove,
   A maid whom there were none to praise
   And very few to love;

2. A violet by a mossy stone
   Half hidden from the eye!
   Fair as a star, when only one
   Is shining in the sky.

3. She lived unknown, and few could know
   When Lucy ceased to be;
   But she is in her grave, and, oh,
   The difference to me!

LONDON AT SUNRISE.

[This is an example of Wordsworth's sonnets, which were very numerous, and on a great variety of subjects. It has been said of his efforts in this form of composition that Wordsworth's sonnet "never goes off, as it were, with a clap, or repercussion, at the close, but is thrown up like a rocket, breaks into light, and falls in a soft shower of brightness."]

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,

Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still.

OTHER AUTHORS OF SECOND PERIOD.

WILLIAM FALCONER.

BORN 1732—DIED 1769.

William Falconer, author of *The Shipwreck*, one of the best sea-poems in the English language, was born at Edinburgh in 1732. His father was a barber. The boy's education was cut short by his going to sea at an early age. When he was about eighteen years of age, the "Britannia," of which he was second mate, was wrecked off Cape Colonna, in Greece, and this experience suggested to him the subject of the poem on which his fame rests. That poem was published in 1762, with a dedication to the Duke of York. Never before in any song of the sea had poetical sentiment been mingled with professional knowledge so accurate. On that account the poem was read with equal pleasure by seamen and by landsmen. Falconer took full advantage of the historical and classical associations of the region in which the shipwreck occurred. The poem was very successful. Through the Duke of York, the author obtained an appointment as midshipman in the royal navy. In October 1769, he sailed from England for India as purser in the "Aurora" frigate. Two months later the vessel foundered, it was supposed, in the Mozambique Channel, and all on board perished. Three editions of *The Shipwreck* were published during Falconer's life-time. The additions and changes he made in the second and third editions were not all improvements. He wrote a few other poems, but none of them are remarkable or memorable.

JAMES BEATTIE.

BORN 1735—DIED 1803.

There are many English poets whose fame rests in each case on a single poem. They may have written other verses, but the one poem is what preserves the name of each in the memory and the affection of posterity. Such were Robert Blair, author of "The Grave;" James Grahame, author of "The Sabbath;" Edward Young, author of "Night Thoughts;" Monk Akenside, author of "The Pleasures of Imagination;" and William Falconer, author of "The Shipwreck." To this class belonged James Beattie, who wrote *The Minstrel*, and who did not write anything else worth remembering. He was born in 1735 at Laurencekirk, in Kincardineshire, where his father was a small farmer and a shopkeeper. In his fourteenth year he obtained a bursary at Marischal College, Aberdeen, where he completed his education. After spending two years as a master in Aberdeen Grammar School, he was in 1760, when only twenty-five years of age, appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy in Aberdeen University. After the publication of the first part of *The Minstrel* (in 1771), Beattie became famous. In London he associated with Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, and the other brilliant wits and men of letters of the time. The king gave him a pension of £200, and the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of LL.D. His later years were made miserable by domestic affliction. He died in 1803, and his life was written by Sir William Forbes of Pitsligo. *The Minstrel* is a didactic poem, written in the Spenserian stanza, and describing the growth of a poetical genius.

JAMES MACPHERSON.

BORN 1738—DIED 1796.

James Macpherson and the Gaelic poems of Ossian, which he professed to translate, have given rise to more controversy than

any literary works of modern times. Macpherson was born in 1738 at Kingussie, in Inverness-shire. He studied for the ministry at Aberdeen. For a time he taught a parish school, and afterwards he acted as a family tutor. In 1762 he startled the world of letters by the publication of *Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem, in Six Books*, which he professed to have translated from Gaelic poems handed down by tradition from the third or the fourth century. The sensation of wonder was increased by the issue of a second epic in eight books, entitled *Temora*, in the following year. The books had a great sale, and Macpherson's fame rose high. Then the great controversy began. Society was divided into two camps—those who believed the poems to be genuine translations of genuine ancient poems, and those who maintained them to be impostures invented by Macpherson. Macpherson did not take any part in the strife, or make any explanations that might have helped his friends. It is now believed that the truth lay between the two extremes —that many of the incidents and scenes in the epics were found in traditionary Gaelic poems, but that their combination and elaboration in epic form were entirely the work of Macpherson. Macpherson made money by his poems. He afterwards spent some years in London as a political writer. He bought a property near Kingussie, to which he gave the fanciful name of Belleville, and he died there in 1796.

THOMAS CHATTERTON.

BORN 1752—DIED 1770.

If Macpherson was a fancied impostor, Thomas Chatterton was a real forger. Yet he was a genius—"the marvellous boy that perished in his pride." He was born in 1752 at Bristol, where his father had been a schoolmaster, but had died shortly before his son's birth. In his tenth year he wrote his first poem. In his twelfth, he began to amuse himself

by imitating ancient parchment manuscripts,—poems and pedigrees. In 1767—in his fifteenth year—he was apprenticed to an attorney. Then he began to produce sham-antiques more boldly. He published a description of the opening of Bristol Bridge in 1248, professedly "from an old M.S.," and the whole city was taken in by it. The "old M.S." was written with his own hand on stained parchment, and in the old lettering and spelling. He pretended to have found these parchments in an old chest in the muniment room of a Bristol church. He sent "the Rowley poems," as he called them, to Horace Walpole, who was completely imposed upon, till more skilful eyes detected the forgeries. A quarrel with his master drove him to London, where he worked hard and won the favour of the booksellers. For a time all went well, and he sent home money to his mother and sisters, along with glowing accounts of his prospects. Then a reaction came. The market was overstocked. The demand ceased. Stung by neglect and want, but too proud to take a meal even from his landlady, he killed himself with a dose of arsenic. On August 24, 1770, he was found lying dead in his garret, surrounded with the fragments of his manuscripts.

TOBIAS GEORGE SMOLLETT.

Born 1721—Died 1771.

The successors of Richardson and Fielding in English fiction were Tobias Smollett and Laurence Sterne, of whom the former was a Scotsman, and the latter an Irishman. Smollett was born near Renton, Dumbartonshire, in 1721. His grandfather was Sir James Smollett of Bonhill, but he got no benefit from his gentle blood. He was educated at the Grammar School of Dumbarton and the University of Glasgow, and after quitting the latter he was apprenticed to an apothecary in Glasgow. At the age of nineteen he went to London in search of fame and fortune. He failed as a dramatic writer, and was glad to

take the position of a surgeon's mate in the royal navy. Afterwards he tried to settle in London as a physician, and failed again. His ill success and the rebuffs he met with soured his spirit, and he wrote biting satires, which disgusted many who were inclined to befriend him. Then he published (in 1748) his first novel, *Roderick Random*, and was at once recognized as a master of fiction. It was followed three years later by *Peregrine Pickle*. The rest of his life was busily employed with literary work. He wrote a *Complete History of England*, the latter part of which was adopted as the sequel to Hume's incomplete history. His finest novel, *Humphrey Clinker*, was finished shortly before his death, which occurred at Leghorn in 1771. The undoubted genius displayed in Smollett's works is marred by moral coarseness.

LAURENCE STERNE.

BORN 1713—DIED 1768.

Laurence Sterne—the most pathetic of English humourists—was born at Clonmel, in 1713. He was educated at Cambridge, and entered the Church of England. He wrote two famous novels—*Tristram Shandy* (1759–62), and *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768). The leading creations of his fancy—Uncle Toby, Corporal Trim, Dr. Slop, and Yorick the parson—are as real and enduring as Falstaff and Shylock. Sterne's fine humour and delicate pathos are often marred by the affected glitter of his style, and by coarseness and indecency. After his death it was proved that he had pillaged largely from Burton, Donne, and other old authors. He died in 1768 in a London lodging-house, with no one beside him but a hired nurse.

ADAM SMITH.

BORN 1723—DIED 1790.

Adam Smith, the founder of the science of political economy, was born in 1723 at Kirkcaldy, in Fifeshire. He was educated at Glasgow and at Oxford. Having acquired some reputation as a lecturer on philosophy, he was in 1751 appointed Professor of Logic in Glasgow University. In the following year he was transferred to the chair of Moral Philosophy. In 1759, he published his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. His doctrine—that our sentiments of approval and disapproval alike are based on sympathy—gained few adherents, and it is now generally abandoned. In 1763 he resigned his chair, and thereafter travelled abroad for two years as companion to the young Duke of Buccleuch. His great economic work, *The Wealth of Nations*, was given to the world in 1776. His leading doctrines were, that labour is the only source of a nation's wealth, and that wealth does not consist in the abundance of silver and gold, but in the abundance of the necessaries of life. Smith's *Wealth of Nations* is, and will probably continue to be, one of the standard books of the world. Apart from its valuable teaching, it is remarkable for the clearness and felicity of its language, and for the aptness of its illustrations. In 1778 he obtained a commissionership of customs, and his last years were spent in ease and comfort. He died in 1790.

GEORGE CRABBE.

BORN 1754—DIED 1832.

Lord Byron called Crabbe

"Nature's sternest painter, yet the best."

The description was as just as it was generous; but probably the sternness of Crabbe's pictures was due to the scenes and the trials of his early life. He was born in 1754, at Aldborough, in

Suffolk, where his father was collector of salt-dues; and he was brought up among rough sailors and smugglers. He was harshly treated by his father, and by the master apothecaries to whom he was apprenticed. At last he won a prize for a poem on *Hope*, offered by a magazine, and thenceforth his heart was set on his becoming a poet. He went to London with the usual hopes, and encountered the usual disappointments. When he was very near starvation, Edmund Burke took him by the hand and introduced him to the booksellers and to some of the first men of the day. His poem, *The Library*, appeared in 1781, and was well received. *The Village* (1783) added to his reputation; but his most successful work was *The Parish Register*, issued in 1807. Long before that—namely, in 1782—Crabbe, by Burke's advice, had entered the Church; and he returned to his native village as curate. Through the influence of friends he was gradually advanced to better livings, his last and best, that of Trowbridge, being worth £800 a-year. There he wrote his last poem, *Tales of the Hall*, and there he died in 1832. A fifth poem, *The Borough*, had appeared in 1810. The almost unvarying theme of Crabbe's poetry is the English poor—their woes, their weaknesses, and their sins.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

BORN 1772—DIED 1834.

Coleridge, the friend of Lamb and Southey and Wordsworth, was born at Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, in 1772. His father, who was a poor country vicar, died soon afterwards, and Coleridge was sent to Christ's Hospital, London. Thence he went to Cambridge, which he left without a degree, owing to the revolutionary views he had imbibed. He enlisted in a regiment of dragoons under an assumed name, and spent there four miserable months. Then, with Southey and Lovell, he engaged in the wild scheme of a "Pantisocracy" already referred

to. When he began to get a little work from the booksellers, he married, and of course increased his difficulties. It was soon after that, however, that his most famous poem, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, was written, and that *Christabel* was begun. He lived for ten years at Keswick, during which he wrote largely for *The Morning Post*, lectured on Shakespeare, and dreamed and talked incessantly. In 1810 he returned to London, and lived with friend after friend. In 1815 he went to live at Highgate with a surgeon named Gilman, who watched over him during the last nineteen years of his life. In 1816, *Christabel*, though still a fragment, was published by Byron's advice. He died at Highgate in July 1834. In his later years he became the slave of opium, and that increased his natural incapacity for work. He formed magnificent schemes, all of which vanished in air. Mention should be made of his *Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni*, which possesses a sustained sublimity suggestive of Milton's song.

CHARLES LAMB.

BORN 1775—DIED 1835.

Charles Lamb—the gentle Elia—was born in London in 1775, and he remained at heart a Londoner till the last. At seventeen, he became a clerk in the India House, and there he served till 1825, when he retired on a pension. He devoted his life to the care of his sister, Mary, who at dinner one day seized a knife in a fit of hereditary madness and stabbed her mother to death. Along with Mary, he wrote the well-known *Tales founded on the Plays of Shakespeare*. His literary fame, however, rests chiefly on his *Essays of Elia*, which appeared originally in "The London Magazine." He spent the last ten years of his life at Enfield, and there he died in 1835.